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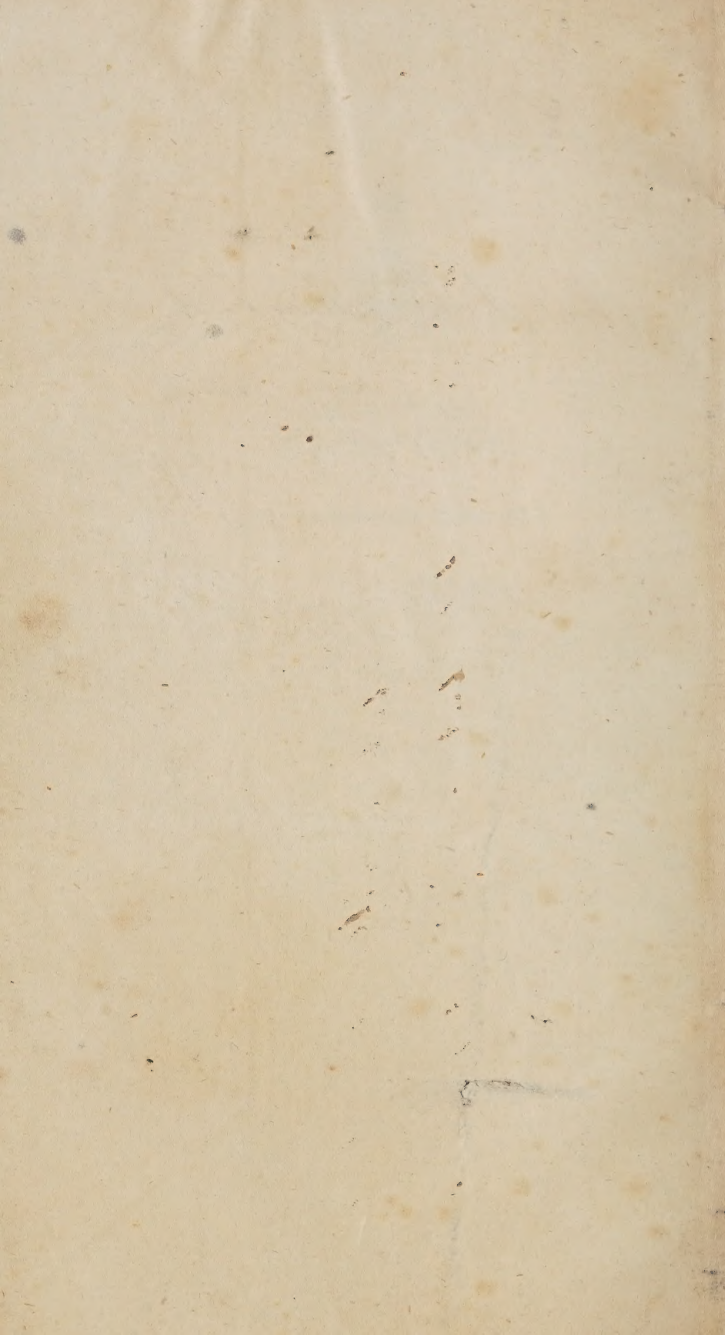


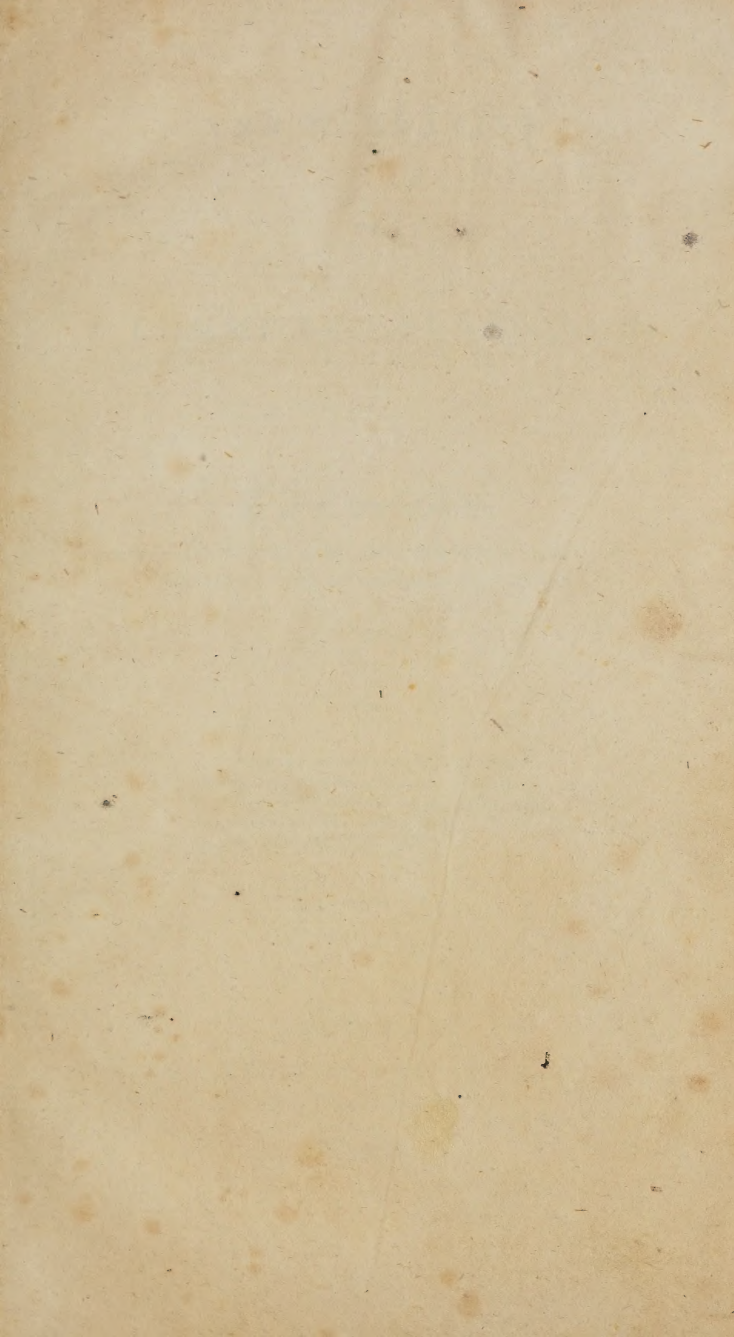
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THE NARRATIVE
OF
A COMMUTED PENSIONER.

By J*** W*****,
LATE OF THE LXXVIII REGT., NOW SERJEANT IN LIEUT.-COL.
MAITLAND'S BATT. OF MONTREAL VOLUNTEERS.


“ I have seen war's lightning flashing,
Seen the bright sword with bayonet clashing,
Seen through red blood the war-horse dashing,
And scorn'd, amid the reeling strife,
To yield a step for death or life.”

MONTREAL:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,
BY J. STARKE AND CO.

1838.

TO THE
OFFICERS, NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS
AND PRIVATES OF THE
British Army and Loyal Volunteers in the Canadas,
THIS NARRATIVE OF SERVICES IN INDIA
IS DEDICATED,
IN ADMIRATION AND RESPECT FOR THE
BRAVERY, PATRIOTISM AND ZEAL DISPLAYED BY THEM
IN CRUSHING THE LATE REBELLION,
BY THEIR HUMBLE SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

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THE
NARRATIVE OF A COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE mutual regard which so long subsisted betwixt your father and myself, not to speak of what I have for you personally, would render it no easy task to refuse any request made by you. Your wish, therefore, to have a narrative of my life, although it may recal some painful recollections, I will with pleasure gratify. Prepare, then, to hear of battles, storms, sieges, hair breadth 'scapes, and all the vicissitudes of a soldier's life. You will likewise, in the course of the narrative, have an account of the nature of the climates of the different foreign countries I have visited; with the dispositions of their inhabitants, their manners, customs and religious ceremonies.

My father, you may perhaps recollect, had, in his younger days, served his Majesty on board a man-of-war, and had been created a warrant officer. After leaving the service, he returned to his native town of C. in the north of Scotland. This town stands on a peninsula, having a very large basin in front capable

of containing the whole of the British Navy. The entrance to this basin is about two miles in width. The place is justly called *Portus Solutis*, or Harbour of Safety. The town contains nearly two thousand inhabitants and its chief trade consists in the manufacture of sack cloth, of which there is a factory in the place, employing about two hundred of both sexes of the population. There is also a salmon fishery, the produce of which is sent to the London market and turns to good account. Pork too, is shipped to London in considerable quantities. The original town lay more towards the entrance of the basin, than the present town, and, as I was informed, never contained more than from three to four hundred people, chiefly fishermen. It was destroyed in consequence of the German ocean forcing its way over a piece of ground which lay low to the water's edge, and, there being no bulworks to protect the place, in one night it was overwhelmed, with a few of its inhabitants; the rest made their way up the country, without being able to save any part of their property.

In this town I was born and brought up. I received the education usually given to those of my rank in life in Scotland, although I profited little by it. On leaving school, I was apprenticed out to a trade. When the term of my servitude had expired, I resolved to visit the metropolis of Scotland, expecting to find there more encouragement in my trade than I had got in my native place. I therefore set out on my journey to Edinburgh, where I arrived in safety,

and, obtaining employment at my business, remained there a considerable time.

In the late long and sanguinary war, which convulsed Europe to its very centre, when England alone stood in the breach, it became necessary to make great exertions to oppose the then Ruler of France, and to prevent his threatened invasion of the country. All men were therefore, called upon to serve their country in some shape or other, and seeing that I must become a soldier, either in a regular regiment or the National Militia; of two evils, I thought to choose the least, and therefore enlisted in the Edinburgh Militia. After remaining in that corps for about three years and six months I found, that instead of having chosen the least, I had chosen the greatest evil, I resolved to volunteer into a regiment of the line. An opportunity soon occurred while we were stationed at Dunbar, when thirty of our regiment, including myself, volunteered into the 78th Highlanders. Previous to volunteering I waited on General M'Kenzie, Col. of the 78th, who had known me before I enlisted. He told me, that if I entered his regiment, and my conduct had been all along good in the Edinburgh Militia, he would make me a serjeant.

Shortly after we had volunteered, we were ordered to join the depôt of the regiment, which was then stationed at Perth. Here we found two hundred other volunteers from the different Scotch Militia regiments. We were placed under the command of

Major Stewart and formed into four companies. I was appointed pay serjeant to the fourth division. The 78th was at this time serving in India, and thither we expected to be sent, so soon as we were properly organised. Accordingly on the 10th of Nov. 1807, we received orders to proceed to the Isle of Wight, thence to embark to join our regiment. After remaining some time at Park House Barracks, the order, for the embarkation of our division on board the Elphinstone and Winchelsea Indiamen, arrived; and, on Christmas day, of the above year, we were all on board our respective vessels. I embarked in the Elphinstone, Capt. James Craigie, Commander. She was a strong built vessel, carrying heavy cannon, I believe thirty-two pounders, on the gun deck. The crew consisted of English, Scotch, Irish, Dutch, French, and Lascars or Indian sailors. The passengers belonged to the 47th, 56th and 78th regiments, in all and of all kinds, about one thousand souls.

Yours, &c. THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER II.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

ALL being now in readiness, the signal for sailing was hoisted by the commodore, and away, the whole fleet went, before a favoring gale. A few days

sailing brought us into the Bay of Biscay, when for three days and four nights we endured all the horrors of a storm. The lightnings flashed—the thunders roared—the winds blew—the rain descended in torrents—and the seas raged around us, rendering it a scene not soon to be erased from the memory. I will not, however, attempt to give you a description of it. There is, I believe, little variety in storms at sea; and you are, I have no doubt already familiar with such a scene, either in its reality, or from the description of some abler pen than mine.

On the fourth evening the storm abated its violence, although the sea still continued much agitated. Next morning we had cleared the Bay; and on the 11th January, ten days after losing sight of Great Britain, we arrived at the island of Madeira, where we remained four days. The signal for sailing being once more hoisted at the admiral's maintop, the fleet again set sail, and soon left the island of Madeira behind. We saw the flying fish in great numbers pursued by the dolphins. We caught a few of these strange creatures and the sailors eat them. There was now a dead calm. Not a breath of wind to cool the air, which was excessively hot. The sharks were day and night prowling around us, wishing for something to fill their hideous mouths. A lady, who was looking over one of the cabin windows, overbalanced herself and fell among these terrible creatures—a boat was instantly lowered and she was snatched from a horrible death. Another accident occurred that same

evening; a soldier, belonging to the 47th regiment, was looking over the ship's side with a child about two years old in his arms, the infant being of a lively turn, sprang from his fathers arms and overboard he went. Another soldier seeing the accident sprang into the sea and seized the child whom he kept afloat until a boat, which had been lowered, reached them, when both were saved.

We had got as far as the latitude of the Cape of Good Hope, when we were again overtaken by a storm, which lasted during a day and a night, we sustained no damage other than the loss of a few top-sails. Here a part of our fleet left us, bound for different stations. Having run a long way to the south in expectation of the trade winds, we began to feel it cold—and we had a good deal of snow for a week or so. After cruising some time in a southern latitude, we had the good fortune to get what we wanted. The ship's course was then altered, and in less than a week we got again into the warm latitudes, with a steady wind blowing on our quarter. After a passage of three months and seventeen days we cast anchor at Bombay. Boats having been procured to land the troops before ten o'clock that day, the whole were once more placed on terra firma. Thousands of the natives came to offer their services in carrying our knapsacks and other baggage, a request which a few of us were foolish enough to comply with. We gave them our knapsacks to carry to the place of our encampment, but no sooner had they got them than

they disappeared, which deprived us of all we at that time possessed. These natives, to us Europeans, presented a strange and striking appearance.— They were all naked, except a turban which they wore upon their heads, and a handkerchief tied round their waists. These were Hindoos, of whom I will have occasion to speak more particularly hereafter. The party which belonged to the 47th, marched off to join the regiment, which lay at a place called Old Woman's Island, in the neighbourhood of Bombay. The men belonging to the 56th and those of the 78th were ordered to encamp at a little distance from the city. For a month we lay on the bare ground with a knapsack for a pillow, and without any covering except the canvass tent; having very foolishly given our beds and bedding to a petty officer on board the vessel we sailed in, upon his representation that they would be of no further use to us, as Government would supply us with articles better suited to the climate of the country. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER III.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE morning after we encamped, my comrade and I went out to walk and to take a view of the

country. In the course of our walk we came to an encampment where a Sepoy regiment lay. In passing a large tent, which was partly open in front, we looked in and saw one of those gods that the Hindoos call a Samea, standing upon a pedestal, I went in and, without any thought, gave it a kick with my foot which made it roll on the ground. Two of the Bramins, who were at the back-side of the tent and whom we had not perceived when we entered, immediately rose up, crying *murgee, murgee*, which signifies murder, seizing us both by the collar, but in a second we laid them alongside their god, and made our retreat. They followed us, but to no purpose; for having got among the tents of our own party we were safe enough. The Bramins, finding that they could not discover us, went to the Governor of Bombay and informed him of the sacrilege that two of the newly arrived Europeans had committed, by knocking down their Samea. That evening the Governor issued orders "that whoever should molest or offend any of the *castes* in or about Bombay, if discovered, should be severely punished."

The following morning my comrade and I went, before the sun rose, to enjoy the cool breeze by the sea side. When we arrived at the beach, we were greatly astonished to see more than a thousand human forms, all in white, kneeling upon the sand. Upon the first appearance of the sun, which now began to peep over the mountain tops, the whole mass of kneeling

people spread forth their hands, as if to welcome his approach. They then arose, went to the water's-brink and threw in handfuls of rice, flour, and pieces of coin. I now perceived that these people were Fire Worshipers, performing their devotions to their deity. I shall here, before proceeding farther with my narrative, give you a brief account of these people, with their religious ceremonies, and their sentiments concerning God. They are called *Guebers* or Fire Worshipers, from the sun being the principal object of their adoration. They believe that God, whom they call Oramasis, is the first of incorruptible things, eternal, unbegotten, and that he is no compound of parts—there is nothing equal to him nor like him—he is the Author of all good, and he is entirely disinterested—he is the most excellent of all excellent beings, and the most intelligent of all intelligent natures—the father of equity, and the parent of all good laws—self-instructed, self-sufficient, without beginning or end—that he existed before the material sun, which is emblematical of its Creator—that he existed from all eternity in an adorable solitude, without any companion or rival, and that he is as to visible things, most like light. One of their prayers is as follows: “O thou glorious and unsearchable Being, Lord of divine essence and attributes, the Lord of abundance and the God of life. It is thou who didst create the intellect and all that is necessary in the mind of thy creatures. It is thou who didst form the body and the soul. It is thou only who truly livest, for thou art

the Lord of life, the only God in the whole world. It is thou who didst make the revolving heavens and the fixed earth. It is thou who didst beautify heaven with the embroidery of the stars and raised the orbs with nine stories. Thou didst plant the earth with the human race and illuminate it by the sun and moon. Thou didst make the world of substances and accidents; but man was thy chief care. Let us turn to rectitude and holiness, for there is nothing else in the regions of the blessed. On thee we depend for all the comforts we enjoy. Continue while it is thy good pleasure to bestow them on thy children." Whether they offer up any sacrifices or not at the present time I do not know, but in former years they did so. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER IV.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

IN the conclusion of my last letter I informed you that the Fire Worshippers were formerly in the habit of offering up sacrifices to their deity. In offering up these sacrifices, they neither used libations nor music nor hallowed bread nor erected altars. The person who intended to offer the sacrifice, which was a sheep, led the victim to an eminence, into a clean place and,

wearing a wreath of myrtle about his Tiara, invoked the god to whom he intended to sacrifice the offered victim. When the priest had cut it into small pieces, each one present took a share, saying, at the same time, that Oramizis desires nothing but the soul of the victim. In the whole course of my travels I have never met with any people so cleanly in their apparel. Their turbans of many folds are pure as snow. Their upper garment is nearly as fine as their turbans. Trowsers worn very wide, drawn together round the waist by a silk cord; and they generally wear a sash of red silk round their loins. They are in general, a tall and slender people, very discreet, but uncommonly superstitious about fire and water. They will not allow you to take any of their fire away, nor even to light your pipe at it. If you should be under the necessity of asking them for a drink of water, they will give it to you, provided you allow them to pour it down your throat. They allow no stranger to touch their cooking utensils, and if any one happens so to do, they immediately destroy the articles thus contaminated, and the offender is obliged to pay the value. This I experienced in my own person; as I happened, one day, to take up a copper pitcher to take a drink, when the owner immediately destroyed it, and I was obliged to pay three rupees as its value. If a fire happens in any of their bungalows or houses (which is no uncommon circumstance), the inmates make no endeavour to secure their safety; saying that their god has come for them. While we were

encamped in the neighbourhood of Bombay, a fire occurred at a place called Dongaree, within a mile and a half of that city, and I, along with many other soldiers, went to aid in extinguishing it. The Fire Worshippers, or Persies, as they are sometimes called, were, on this occasion, compelled to quit their bungalows, the soldiers dragging out both men, women, and children, from the flaming houses. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER V.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

AFTER remaining about two months in the neighbourhood of Bombay, we were ordered to embark on board country boats and proceed to a place called Tannah. Near to that village was a strong fort, which being empty, we took possession of. Here we received our arms and accoutrements and commenced drilling and mounting guard. The rainy season had now commenced. The soldiers were attacked with dysentery which cut off nearly twenty men. I did not escape the malady, but suffered much for seven days. On the eighth day I felt an excessive desire for something to eat, and I got the cook, who was a native, to make me a plum pudding, and procure for me a bottle of port wine from the sub-

conductor. I then eat my pudding, and drank about an English pint of the wine, and in about a quarter of an hour after, I fell into a sound sleep, and did not awake until next morning, when I felt much refreshed, and the complaint had almost entirely subsided. When the doctor came to the hospital to visit the sick, which was generally about eight o'clock in the morning, he was much surprised to find me recovering, as when he had left me the preceding evening, he did not expect that I would get better. Every day I continued to improve in my health and in a month after I was able to do duty. I then informed him what I had done, and its consequent effects.

The fort in which we were stationed, seemed evidently to have belonged to the Hindoos previous to its occupation by the British, for within the first gate there is placed a large image, about ten feet high, without either legs or arms. The head was round like a cannon shot, with one eye in the forehead. This statue or image was all besmeared with red paint. At the bottom of this huge god of the Hindoos was a trough, which would contain about five gallons. It was kept constantly full of cocoa nut oil. Every morning the devotees of this strange looking idol came, anointed their foreheads, arms and breasts with the red paint, then fell down before it and kissed the ground seven times. They then presented their offerings of cocoa nuts, rice, and small pieces of coin which they call pici. I was much shocked at their superstitious ceremonies, and would most certainly

have knocked the idol to pieces, had not a sentry been placed upon it, with orders not to allow any one to molest the worshippers, or to touch the image. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER VI.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

BEING always of an inquisitive disposition, I was in the habit, wherever we were stationed, of collecting all the information possible relative to the manners, customs, and religion of the natives. I have, in consequence, become possessed of many particulars regarding the Hindoos, and these I shall now detail to you; but, as they were acquired from various individuals, at different times, in desultory conversations, I may, perhaps, not be able to do it, in so clear and distinct a manner as might be wished; yet, I trust sufficiently, so as to give you a tolerable idea of these people.

The religion of the Hindoos is Pagan. Their sacred books, they say, were sent by God to one of their prophets called Brama. In one of these books, which is called the Vidam, it is written, that "one supreme God is the author and governor of the universe; and it is he alone who rules the world and all

that is therein—it is he alone who rules the eight hundred and forty thousand kinds of living creatures; but because of his various appearances and properties, he has different names. He is called *Biruuma*, because he creates; *Wishtnu*, because he protects; and *Ischuren*, because he destroys. This supreme being, they say, is invisible, incomprehensible, immutable, without figure or outward form. No man can comprehend him—his essence fills all things and every thing that is, proceeds from him. All power, all wisdom, all knowledge, all holiness and all truth dwell in him. He is infinitely good, just and merciful. It is he alone who created all things, and who preserves all things, and who delights to dwell in the hearts of all good men, that at last he may conduct them to eternal happiness. Man must resemble the great God;—his good actions in life must outweigh his bad ones;—he must fit himself for eternal happiness in this world, and if he neglect to do so, his soul must go through a number of transmigrations, to purify and refine it. God never punishes but to cure. He is the lover of the souls of men, and they never will be eternally lost. God, as the protector and deliverer, is said by the Bramins, to have already been nine times in this lower world, delivering men from destruction and restoring them to a state of purity. At certain periods they sacrifice a sheep, and at the time of doing so, they repeat, with a loud voice, these words, “When shall the Saviour be born? When shall the Redeemer

appear?" The Bramins also say, "that before sin had entered the habitation of man, myrrh, honey and wine flowed from the fountains; but when man made a bad use of these blessings, God deprived them of them, and they were sentenced to work and labour here for ever after." When a Hindoo dies, his living wife is burned upon the same pile with the dead husband. I asked one of my informants why this was done? His only answer was, "that it had been the custom for many generations to do so, and that it was voluntary on the woman's part." I replied, that it was only nominally a voluntary act on the woman's part, and I was certain that in many instances, it was submitted to with very great reluctance, and that it was a custom that ought to be immediately abolished. He said, that for his own part, he would have no objections, for his religion taught him not take away life, except in self-defence.

The Hindoos, although they believe in one supreme God, have also a belief in inferior deities. Their belief is, that the Supreme Being appoints these inferior or tutelar deities to the charge of cities, towns and villages, for their protection or destruction, as his will may be, and that without his permission they can exercise no power whatever.

The Hindoos have a very singular mode of trying any of their *caste* who is accused of theft. The accuser and the accused are brought before an image by a Bramin. From each party he gets a bettle nut, both of which he fixes on the face of the image; and

if the nut of the accused falls first, guilty or not guilty, he is taken away to be punished.

In one of my conversations with a Bramin on the subject of religion, I advised him to turn Christian, and began to explain some of the Christian tenets. "All this is very good," he replied, "and your religion may be good, so is ours—our fathers received their religion from their fathers as did yours—our fathers loved their children, and certainly would not deceive them by giving them a religion they did not believe to be the true one." The Mussulman, the Persie and the Christian have the same proof. Whilst we were conversing, a drunken soldier came reeling against us, and caught the old priest by the beard. I laid hold of the fellow, and dragged him away, and got him put into confinement. The next time I saw the Bramin, he asked me if the man who had seized him by the beard were a Christian? I answered that he was. "Go," said he, "and see if any Hindoo gets drunk, or abuses any of you Christians." This completely closed my mouth, and I made no farther attempts at converting him.

The Hindoos are a very cleanly people. Like the Jews, they have an abhorrence of swine's flesh, and you cannot insult a Hindoo more, than by offering him a piece of pork, or to touch him with it. Should any of them have inadvertently touched any part of the animal, they consider themselves defiled and unclean, until such time as they are absolved by a Bramin. This these priests are always very ready to do, provided

the unfortunate fellow's purse is heavy enough; but if he has not the means to satisfy the Bramin's demands, he is certain to have a severe punishment to undergo in the shape of penance. I shall here mention a few of these penances. One of them is as follows:—The defiled person is not allowed, for the space of a month, to lie down or even to sit; he must take his sleep in the best way he can standing, not being allowed to lean against anything for support. Another, is to have the one arm raised above the head; and to keep it in that position for a length of time, and the consequence is, that frequently their arms become unfit for use, as it gets completely benumbed and powerless. Another, and apparently the most severe, is having a hook passed through one of their ribs, and then hung up a few feet from a fire, whilst the officiating Bramin throws into it some powders which casts out a rather agreeable scent. In this position the unhappy wretch must remain, until the Bramin pronounces him purified from his uncleanness. It frequently happens, however, that the defiled person will neither part with his money, nor suffer penance. He then loses caste, as it is termed,—that is, he is thrown out of his tribe, and none of his relations or acquaintances are allowed to speak to him. They are called *Pears* or bad men. These *Pears*, or Hindoos who have lost caste, are very numerous in India. They are chiefly employed as cooks, washermen, watermen, and in all kinds of drudgery required by the Europeans. Except in dress, they conform to all the

customs of the Europeans, and they are not slow in adopting their vices. In fact, they get so debased, that for the sake of money, they will become necessary to the prostitution of their own daughters. They drink like fish, and that of the worst sorts of arrack, new from the still, which would very shortly kill a European if he were to indulge himself in the use of it, but seems to have no effect upon them. There is another liquor which they use. It is got by tapping the top branches of the cocoa nut tree. This they call *tady*, and is very agreeable and safe to drink, provided it is used early in the morning or after sunset. It soon, however, ferments and then it becomes extremely hurtful to a European constitution. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER VII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have, in my last letter, given you all the information in my power regarding the Hindoos; and it may not be amiss, before proceeding with my narrative, to mention a few particulars about the opinions and customs of the professors of the Mahometan religion, who are very numerous in India.

They believe in our God, whom they call Alla, and that Mahomet is his prophet—that Moses had

an existence and was sent from God to teach mankind the way to paradise—that Alla sent Jesus Christ to teach mankind; and that the Jews, his countrymen, crucified him; and lastly, that he sent Mahomet, being the last and greatest of his prophets. They likewise believe that prayer, with fasting, conducts mankind half way to the palace of Alla—and that those who persevere in prayer are truly in quest of God, and shall be hereafter united to him. They pray five times a day. They must not, however, ask for riches or honours, but petition Alla for purity of mind that they may seek nothing but him. They are taught, that should it please Alla to send affliction, they must not spurn at the visitation; as those whom Alla afflicts, he loves when they receive it with resignation. The true mark of a good man, they say, is to be possessed of a tender heart, to have a hatred of the world, and a distrust of self. Many of these Mahometans or Mussulmans go a pilgrimage to Mecca, the city of their prophet, and have in consequence great reputation for sanctity amongst their brethren. They do not allow the adoration of images, statues, or similitudes of divine things. A great number of them are merchants, and, as far as my experience goes, and I had a good many transactions with them, they are very fair in their dealings. Their dress consists of a turban, generally white as snow, but sometimes green or blue; a large white gown, down to their heels, with wide trowsers, and a sash, generally of silk, tied round their waist. They

are a steady and sober people, but very proud, and are seldom seen to laugh. They are in general strongly built, and possess considerable physical strength. They are in most respects superior to the Hindoos. In my next letter I shall proceed with my narrative. In the meantime, Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER VIII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I NOW again resume my narrative after a long digression. The rainy months being over, we received orders to proceed to Bombay, thence to Goa, there to join the main body of our regiment. In ten days we arrived at our destination, and were welcomed by the old hands of the regiment. The strength of the corps was then exactly five hundred men, which, with the addition of our party, made the regiment nine hundred strong; and, in about two months after, we got an additional two hundred and fifty, all disciplined men, fit for immediate service; although we were not brought into action for three years and ten months thereafter.

The Island of Goa is a settlement belonging to Portugal, and is governed by a Viceroy from that country. It is about twenty miles in length; and

from eight miles to a quarter of a mile in breadth. There are a couple of Portuguese regiments who do duty in the place. The greater part of the soldiers live at old Goa, which is the chief city, the rest at a town called Panfum. Formerly the Inquisition existed here in all its power, but at the time I lived there, it was divested of its terrors, the king having granted a religious toleration. The priests, however, still swarm in it; and are computed to be no fewer than five thousand out of a population of twenty thousand, consisting of Portuguese, Hindoos, Mahometans and Persies. The monks are principally of the order of St. Francis; belonging to which order there is a very large monastery, standing upon an eminence by the sea-shore near to a place called Caba, where a temporary barrack had been erected for the 78th. The Island is very healthy, and the heat at no time oppressive, as it stands high and is exposed to the cool sea breezes. The natural productions of the Island are rice, tobacco, pepper, the sugar cane, with excellent pot herbs. Fruits are in great abundance and very delicious. The animals used for food are buffalos, swine and sheep; but the best is scarcely eatable. The buffalo meat is of a dry nature and very lean. There is also abundance of poultry, and very cheap, but much inferior to those of Europe. It is somewhat strange that dogs, brought into these warm climates gradually degenerate; they become indolent, lose their native energies and ultimately become unfit for any use.

The soldiers in this country are well provisioned. The price is deducted from their pay, and generally amounts to one half, the other half they receive to provide themselves with such necessaries as occasion requires. Upon the whole, I do assure you, that a soldier in India is far better off than common tradesmen at home, although it must be allowed that no private soldier can save money. The day and the journey must end together, with all private soldiers, in whatever country they sojourn. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER IX.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WHILE we were stationed at Goa, a foolish affray took place between a brother serjeant and myself, which was the cause of my being reduced to the ranks. One day while at breakfast, serjeant G. asked me to go to the canteen and take a glass or two. Seeing that he had already got enough, I told him I would not, that day, drink more than my allowance. This refusal he looked upon as an affront, and began to abuse me, calling me, and the other volunteers that came along with me to India, cowards. I said that that had yet to be proved; but should it turn out so, we could follow the example set by him at the battle

of Assay and hide ourselves in a field of rice. This rendered him quite furious, and he struck me a blow on the side of the head. Being of a temper naturally hot, I could not stand this, nor endure it without retaliation, I accordingly returned the blow, when a scuffle ensued, which terminated nothing to the advantage of the aggressor, as in the course of it, his foot slipped and he fell on the corner of a bed, and broke a couple of his ribs. "Rightly served," now echoed from twenty mouths, he being much disliked, not because he did his duty strictly, but because he was what we denominated a *pickthank*, that is, one who was constantly carrying to the officers some trifling complaints against his fellow soldiers. In consequence of his hurts, serjeant G. was obliged to go into the hospital; where he remained three weeks. In the interval, the busy tongue of fame had conveyed to the ears of our commanding officer, that I had been fighting, and that I was the cause of my brother serjeant being in Hospital. I was ordered in due arrest, and remained so, until serjeant G. was discharged from the hospital. We were then brought before a regimental court martial; and all that I could urge in my defence, or the witnesses' evidence on my behalf, was unavailing; we were both sentenced to be reduced to the rank and pay of privates. I certainly had some reason to expect a more lenient sentence, as I had for upwards of three years performed the duty of a serjeant to the entire satisfaction of my commanding officers, and this was the

first offence I had committed against the Articles of War. After having been so long a non-commissioned officer, the situation of a private soldier was by no means agreeable to me, and as I had a relation residing at Madras, who held a high situation in the Company's service, I thought of applying to him to relieve me. I accordingly waited on my commanding officer and mentioned to him my intention, and requested a certificate of my conduct while under his command. He desired me to write my letter and leave it with him, and he would consider of it. I did so, and the next day I received my letter back, with a note from my commander to this effect, "that my late conduct, which had been the cause of my being reduced, prevented him from giving me such a character as would be of service to me." I was much disappointed; but had no alternative but to submit.

Yours, &c. THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER X.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

IN a short time after the occurrence mentioned in the conclusion of my last letter, orders were received that we should hold ourselves in readiness to proceed on an expedition, and, that a Rifle Company should be formed from the best marksmen in each

regiment. Three companies were instantly formed, clothed, received rifles and accoutrements, and commenced drilling. In the course of a month we were embarked, and, after a pleasant voyage we, on the 2d February, 1811, arrived at Madras, where the fleet, that was destined for the expedition, was assembling. The morning after we cast anchor, I was somewhat surprised by my commanding officer telling me, that if I wished to go ashore to see my relative, I was at liberty to do so. I eagerly embraced the offer, and getting myself ready, got into the boat, alongside in which were major F. and other two officers who were also going ashore. Immediately on landing, I went in quest of the person I wanted to see; but how great was my disappointment when I found that he had left Madras for Britain a month before. The next day major F. accosted me, saying that he was sorry to find that I had been disappointed in not seeing my friend; "but," said he, "continue to behave yourself, and on the first vacancy I will restore you to your former rank."

We remained but a short time at Madras, when every thing being in readiness, the fleet set sail in three divisions, having eleven thousand troops on board, comprising the 59th, 69th, 89th and 78th European regiments, with a few squadrons of the 22d Light Dragoons, and about four thousand Sepoy, or native troops; likewise, a few Artillerymen with field pieces. We continued on our course with a gentle breeze for about a month, when the water on board

getting scarce, it was determined to stop and replenish our stock at the first watering place we should come to. In a few days after, we had the satisfaction of seeing an Island on our starboard quarter, and the whole fleet made for the desired haven, where, in the course of a few hours, we came to an anchor. The Island appeared to be covered with wood, which came down to the very water's edge. Next morning, the watering parties of the different vessels, were all on the alert to procure an additional supply of that necessary article. The Rifle Companies were also ordered ashore to practice ball firing. This continued for five successive days. On the morning of the fifth day, we again weighed anchor and proceeded on our voyage. The next place we made was Malacca, where we remained for a week, taking in fresh provisions. I was not ashore there, so I can give you no account of the place. After leaving Malacca the Yellow Fever, or some other malady resembling it, attacked the men in the vessel I was on board. The unfortunate sufferers got completely mad before they died, and when life was extinct, their bodies became perfectly black. There were no fewer than eighteen of the men died of this disease. I was also attacked by it, and when the first symptoms appeared, I adopted the plan of one of the sailors on board Captain Cook's ship when at the Island of Java, that is to say, I got nearly drunk. Having procured a bottle of arrack from the ship's steward, I made up and slung my hammock, drunk nearly the whole bottle of

spirits, and got under the blankets. I vomited very much during the night, but next morning, thank God, the fever was gone, although I felt considerable uneasiness from the effects of the liquor. When the doctor made his visit next morning, he enquired how I was, I told him I was nearly well, and at the same time I mentioned the cure I had taken. He laughed and said I shall acquaint the commanding officer with this new cure of yours. In less than half an hour, major F. came to see me, and inquired what put it into my head to get drunk. I replied, that in reading Captain Cook's voyages, I had observed it mentioned that on their arrival at Java, the ship's crew was attacked with the fever of the country, with the exception of a cook, who got himself drunk every night while they remained at the Island;—besides, I replied, the one devil drives out the other. Well done W. I shall inform the general of this matter, which he accordingly did. Next day, the whole medical staff came on board and examined me. I stated exactly how I had been seized, and what I had taken as a cure. Double allowance of arrack was then ordered to each man, with an addition of half a pint of shrub per day, so long as the fever continued amongst us. None died after this, except two, who were too far gone to receive any benefit from the cure. Having reached the straits of Malacca, we were obliged to come to an anchor every night, in consequence of innumerable small islands scattered around as far as the eye could reach. None of

these Islands exceeded two miles in circumference. We now made the Island of Java, the place of our destination, after a tedious voyage of five months.
Yours, &c. THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XI.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WE had no sooner reached our destination than preparations were made for disembarking the troops. The light brigade was first landed, and without any opposition on the part of the enemy, marched five miles up the country. The heavy brigade and cavalry were also landed the same evening. The 78th passed the night, part of them in a coffee field, and part in a store for the same commodity, at that time nearly empty. A very laughable incident occurred that evening. The men, when they got amongst the coffee, thought they had got into a field of common beans, and began to eat of them greedily. They however soon repented their temerity, for they were seized with such a violent vomiting that they concluded they were poisoned. The doctors were sent for, and as soon as they came, the cause of the poor fellows' sickness was discovered, when they got well laughed at. They, however, spent a very uncomfortable night of it. The light brigade were

more fortunate, having got into a field of water melons, which they found very pleasant and refreshing, after having lived so long on salt provisions. We remained two days without advancing. On the evening of the second day, one of our company having got sick I was ordered to see him to the beach, and get him conveyed on board the ship. I did so, and having seen him safe on board I went on my way to return to my company. During my absence the brigade had moved from its ground. There was no one left to direct me how to proceed; but as I judged that they had proceeded towards Batavia, I also took that direction. I walked on until I came to a place where there were two roads; the one leading straight forward; the other branching off to the left. As I was ignorant which of these roads I should take, I threw up my sword, determined to take that road towards which the point of the sword should be directed upon its fall, and fortunately for me it turned out to be the right one. I proceeded onwards, and not long after I met Sir Samuel Auchmudy, the Commander-in-Chief, with his staff. He demanded of me the reason of my being behind and alone. I told him I had been sent to escort a sick soldier to the beach. He did not seem pleased, and said that two men ought to have been sent with him, as it was unjust to make any one soldier carry the arms and accoutrements of a sick man, such a distance. "Go," said he, "and remain for the night with the first inlying picquet you come to." I marched on, and in about

half an hour after I parted from the Commander in Chief, I was challenged by a sentry, of the 59th Riflemen. I told him who I was, and he having informed me where my own company was to be found, I again marched forward. Darkness now enveloped me; and you may conceive that my situation was very far from pleasing, traversing a strange country alone and in darkness. I however, proceeded on my cheerless and lonesome way, crooning over a favorite Scotch ditty, said to be "Lord Moira's farewell to Scotland," upon his leaving that country to join the army in Holland. I had scarcely finished the second stanza, when a beast of the forest sprung across my path, and, with a tremendous growl, darted into the wood, followed by another savage beast which appeared to me to be in pursuit of the first. I immediately unslung my rifle, and loaded it with a couple of running shots, determined to sell my life as dear as possible if I should be attacked by any of these ravenous creatures. As I marched on at a brisk pace, I saw at a distance lights moving to and fro with a circular motion, and seemingly approaching me. I halted, fixed my sword on my rifle and prepared for the worst. In a few minutes the lights came close to me, when I found them to be flambeaux, carried by three Malays as a protection from the wild beasts that are continually prowling about during the night in that country. This is a very necessary precaution, and no person travelling at night in that country, should neglect to carry lights with them, as

the beasts of prey always avoid lights. I made a sign to the Malays to give me one of their lights, with which they complied without hesitation, and perhaps it is well that they did, as to tell the truth, had I been refused, I might have done mischief considering that my life might almost be said to depend upon the possession of the light. At the same time I may remark (although I was not aware of this until after) that my life was in fully as great danger from the Malays as from the beasts of the forest, as they are so fond of fire arms that they would not hesitate to murder any one for the sake of them, provided they could get off with impunity. Believe me, I consider my escape on this occasion to have been one of a miraculous and providential nature, and one that can never be obliterated from my mind. Had they made an attempt to seize my arms, I might indeed have dispatched one of them; but there still would have been two to grapple with, and these armed with daggers, the Malays never being without these weapons in their belts, so that my chance of escape must have been small indeed. The Malays having parted from me, I continued my journey; and having first slung my rifle across my shoulders, I then began to use my light in the same manner as I had seen the Malays do. In about an hour after, I came up with my own company who had bivouaced in the road for the night. Upon my arrival I informed Captain Cameron that I had met the Commander-in-Chief and his staff, and that he was highly displeased at

my having been sent alone with the sick soldier, and that it was likely he, Captain Cameron, would hear of it the next day. "It cannot be helped now" replied that officer, "but to make you amends you shall do no duty until we reach Batavia." Being dismissed, I unloosed my knapsack from my shoulders, stretched myself upon the ground, and resigned myself to sleep. Next day news was brought that three men belonging to a Sepoy regiment had been torn to pieces by the wild beasts near to the place where I received the flambeau from the Malays. We remained two days at the place where I had rejoined my company, and on the third we marched into Batavia, the French having evacuated it and retired to a strong position called Cornelius. The light brigade which entered the city, was comprised of the following companies; viz. the light and rifle companies of the 59th, 69th and 78th, with five companies of the 89th amounting in all to eighteen hundred men commanded by General Gillespie; and I am confident that the British army could not produce a finer or a braver set of fellows. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER

LETTER XII

MY DEAR FRIEND,

UPON our arrival at Batavia, we were marched into the great square where the stadt-house stands

there the authorities came and presented the keys of the city to our commander. The general then caused it to be proclaimed, that the British army had come to free the Island from French tyranny, and that thereafter it would be given back to the Dutch Government. We now understood that the French army amounted to twenty-five thousand men, composed of Dutch, French and Malays, commanded by a veteran of the name of Jansin. The day following our occupation of the town, we again marched in quest of the enemy. We had not proceeded more than an hour, when we were saluted with a tremendous volley of musketry and grape shot. Not an enemy, however, were to be seen, as they were strongly posted within a wood, behind barricades of newly felled trees. Their cannon were too much elevated to do much execution amongst us, but the rifles and musketry told sharply. We had only two cannons with the Brigade, which were speedily brought into play, and did great execution. The Artillery continued to cannonade the enemy for some time, but not a shot was fired by the rest of the Brigade. Becoming impatient of our inactivity, we called out to the General to allow us to charge and scour the woods. At last an order to that effect was given, and forward we dashed, like some mighty torrent, sweeping all before us. Five Riflemen, along with myself having forced our way through a hedge which impeded our progress, we were astonished to find ourselves in the midst of the French Ar-

tillery. I was the first who got through, and as soon as I discovered where I was I fired my rifle, and the other five men did the same, and I believe, each brought down his man. The remaining gunners threw down their sponges, &c. and fled. The French Army, having been driven back at all points, retreated to Cornelius. I do here assure you that I was the first soldier who put hands upon the cannon taken upon this occasion. I do not mention this by way of a boast, or with the view of making it appear that I was braver than my associates, but simply state the fact, that such was my good fortune. After the enemy had been driven back from their position, our Commander formed us into a solid column, and addressed us saying that we had behaved nobly, in completely defeating an enemy triple our number, and taking six pieces of Artillery, and added, that he wished it was in his power to reward us all as we deserved. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XIII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

IN my last letter I gave you an account of the first action in which I had ever been engaged. We gained the victory, but it was with the loss of a great

number of brave soldiers; but our loss was not in any degree equal to that of the enemy. The enemy, as I mentioned before, retreated within the strong fortification at Cornelius. Before proceeding to attack them within their entrenchments, it was necessary for us to erect batteries. The period, therefore, between the tenth and twenty-second days of the month, was occupied in erecting these batteries, and a heavy train of Artillery having been landed from the *Illustrious*, 74, was planted in them. Upon the morning of the 22d, a strong detachment of the enemy came down, and made themselves masters of all the batteries, driving out all the sailors who were then planting the cannon. The 78th, along with the 14th and 69th, after some severe fighting, retook all the batteries, but not until the French had spiked a few of the guns. The detachment of the enemy retreated once more to Cornelius, after losing a good many men in killed, wounded and prisoners. The British likewise lost a good many men. After the action I went over the field, and I observed many things worth recording, a few of which I shall now mention to you. In one place I saw two contending parties lying dead, each transfixed with the bayonet of the other. A little farther forward I beheld a wounded soldier dashing his head upon the ground and groaning most piteously. He did not speak, although I called to him, asking if I could render him any assistance. A Cavalry officer, I believe Captain T. of the 22d Light Dragoons, was passing at

the time, and seeing the poor fellow suffering so much from his wounds, told me to put him out of pain by shooting him through the head; I said I could not do it; upon which he drew his pistol and shot him. I then examined in what place he had received his first wound, and found that it was in his left breast, a few inches below the nipple. I then took another direction, and came to a part of the field where a number of the 78th lay dead and wounded. Amongst the latter there was one young man with whom I had been long acquainted and for whom I had a great respect. He had the misfortune to receive a cannon shot, which took away a part of his belly and nearly severing his right thigh from his body. I sat down beside him, in order to condole with him on his sad condition. After conversing with him for a few seconds, he begged of me to get him some water: fortunately, I had a canteen full at my side which I gave him, and in a few minutes he had emptied it. He then took me by the hand and exclaimed, "Oh! my good friend, if you are fortunate enough to return to Scotland, let my sister know of my fate. Tell her that she was the cause of my being a soldier; but I forgive her. She may now take the property belonging to me. She did all in her power to poison the mind of my poor old father against me before he died. She ever prayed for my destruction and it is now accomplished, so as to inherit my property; but perhaps she will not live long to enjoy it. Oh! W. I feel the chill hand of death creeping over all my

body. Farewell, farewell!" He spoke no more; but after a few heaves and struggles he yielded up as brave a spirit as had ever beat in the breast of man. On my return to my native land, I wrote to his sister informing her of the death of her brother; and in return, received a very kind and grateful letter, thanking me for the trouble I had thus taken, in informing her of the fatal end of her brother; at the same time making inquiry if there were any monies due to the deceased as prize money, &c. being disgusted at her mercenary views, I never took the trouble to write her again. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XIV.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

ON the evening of the 26th August, when all nature was hushed to repose, and nought was to be heard save the voice of the distant sentinels proclaiming that all was well, I laid myself down on the green sward, at the foot of a large tree, with my knapsack for a pillow. I fell into a train of thought concerning the many vicissitudes in a soldier's life, and also upon the expected rencounter of the following day. I thus soliloquised: "I am now surrounded by a number of brave men, many of whom, before to-

morrow's sun sets may be numbered with the dead, and have taken up their quarters, where the sound of no earthly bugle will awake them. They are now buried in profound sleep, unconscious of all passing events. Sleep on, my brave comrades, and may some celestial spirit hover over your heads and convey some pleasing vision to your souls. I may be one of those who is doomed to fall in to-morrow's engagement; but fear shall never take possession of my soul. I will not yield to the dastard. Honour forbids it. Then the thoughts of my wife and little ones—and the destitute condition my death would place them—the thought nearly unmanned me." I started once more to my feet, and casting up my eyes towards heaven, methought I heard a voice, in a gentle whisper, address me in these words, "Is not *He* who protected you in the two former engagements sufficiently able to protect you again in the sanguinary field—put your trust, therefore, in *Him*." I became calm, and again stretched myself on the ground, and endeavoured to compose myself to sleep. I closed my eyes and soon fell into a profound slumber. A strange vision presented itself to my mind's eye. I thought a person of gigantic size stood before me. He had a stern appearance, but he spoke mildly. He said "follow me to yonder place," at the same time pointing towards the sea side. In casting my eye in the direction pointed out, I thought I perceived a number of the men of our Regiment to all appearance drunk, and behaving like madmen. I

thought I challenged one of them for their improper conduct, and that they began to abuse me, and endeavoured to strike me. My conductor then took me by the hand and said, "let us go from amongst them." He then led me towards a rock which lay at some distance, and having arrived at it, he desired me to ascend the same. I did so; but it was with great difficulty I accomplished it. I then again met my conductor, who said to me, "look to the place you have left behind." I looked and saw the sea violently agitated. I likewise thought I saw whole sections of the men swept away into the yawning deep, and were no more seen. My conductor then desired me to look upwards to the sky. I did so, and perceived a large opening in the heavens. My guide then told me that he had orders to take me thither, and in an instant he caught me by the middle, carried me up and placed me on solid ground. It appeared to be a vast garden field of flowers and fruit trees. There was no regular road; for however cautiously I directed my steps, still I occasionally trod upon the flowers which grew in my path. I told my guide that I was certainly doing wrong in treading down the flowers. To this however he made no answer, but proceeded to a large white house, and said, we must enter that building. We entered by a wide door which stood open and led us into a large hall where I saw, arranged along the wall, a number of figures of birds of the colour of gold. They sung so melodiously that it baffles all description. In the

centre of this hall stood a large table, on which was placed a sand glass, part being run down, and my name written in full upon the glass. A door at the farther extremity of the hall opened, and a person, of a most reverend appearance, entered. He was clothed in a white robe which reached from the neck downwards, and was similar to those worn by the Hindoo Bramins. He turned towards me, and said, with a frowning countenance, that I had trampled down his flowers and soiled the hall with my dirty feet. He then addressed my guide, and asked him why he had brought me there, and by whose authority he had acted? My guide said "that it was by order of his son." At that instant a door opened, and a young man of comely appearance entered, and said, "Oh! Father, this is the person who was so much abused by the men who were washed away into the sea." The reverend looking old man then addressed me with more mildness, and said, "your father was a good man and a good soldier and kept his shoes always clean. Imitate his example." I said "my father was never a soldier." "He was," he replied, "although he never, like you, destroyed my flowers or yet wore a sword by his side. Take him away and shew him his father." The old man then departed. After he had gone, I asked the young man to let me have the sand glass, as my name was upon it. "The sand glass," he replied, "indeed belongs to you; but it must remain where it is until every grain of its contents has run down." He then

led me away, my former guide following us, and having gone a short distance we came to a large iron gate, through the bars of which I saw my father, sitting piling up a number of books. At a little distance I saw my sister, to whom I had been much attached during her life time. She perceived me first, and told my father, and both came to the gate and spoke to me. I told my father I would not go away again, but stay and read the books, and asked him to open the gate and let me in. He said he had not the key, but that the young man who was with me had. I then applied to him for the key, but he said that I must not get in at this time. I said I would then climb the gate, and accordingly I attempted to do so, but the higher up I got the bars appeared to increase. The young man said "you will never get in that way." I therefore gave up the attempt. The young man then turned to my guide, and directed him to take me back to the top of the rock, and remain there until he sent me a present. Upon this we departed, and returned by the same way and in the same manner we had ascended. We had remained there but a short time when I perceived a person coming towards us having three pieces of red silk cloth in his hand. I thought he tied one piece round my left arm, another round my left thigh, and the remaining piece round my right ankle, saying at the same time that that was the present promised me by the young man. At this stage of my dream I was awoke by one of the serjeants of the company, call-

ing me to get up and fall into the ranks. I asked what o'clock it was, he told me it was exactly five o'clock. I immediately got up, joined my company, and in less than a quarter of an hour, was on the march to storm the supposed impregnable works at Cornelius. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XV.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

IN making the attack upon Cornelius, the company I belonged to led the advance, having a Dutch guide, with two officers, about fifty yards in front of the whole. We were challenged by a French sentinel on the outermost post; the Dutchmen in front gave him the watchword, which he had previously obtained unknown to us. The Frenchman being thus thrown off his guard, the guide sprang upon him, mastered his arms and dispatched him without any alarm being given. We were then ordered to proceed until we came to a bridge which led over the river, towards the enemy's strong position. The sentinel at that post was fast asleep, and being immediately seized, was made prisoner. Here we made a second halt to wait for Col. Gibb's division, which was to support us. In a

few minutes they came up, and in the interval, Gen. Gillespie who addressed us as he had done every section of his army separately. He told us that at the farther end of the bridge the enemy's entrenchments lay, and that there was a *chevaux de frize* in front of the whole, which was first to be cleared, and then we were to dash amongst the enemy sword in hand, that there was to be no firing, and not a prisoner was to be taken. "Now onwards, follow me," said the brave general. This was no common strife, for we had to contend with an enemy more than double our number, surrounded on all sides by batteries with a large fort in front, entrenched within a deep dry ditch with a *chevaux de frize*, whose spikes, like so many spears seemed to threaten instant destruction to any who might attempt to assail it. They had likewise a large park of Artillery, ready to pour upon the assailants a storm of round, grape and cannister shot. Having gained the farther end of the bridge, we halted for a few moments. The General then took off his hat and cheered. We followed his example; when forward! forward! was the general cry, and onwards we rushed to the slaughter, and in a few minutes we grappled with our foes—sword met sword and the blood flowed in copious streams. The enemy fought stoutly, and long continued the deadly conflict. We fought man to man, and bodily strength was put to the test. We drove the enemy before us, trampling upon the bodies of the dead and dying, deaf and insensible to the cries of the wounded. Towards the conclusion

of the affray, a Frenchman and I grappled; he was a much stronger man than I. We both fell, and I have no doubt he would have speedily finished my career, had not one of my comrades run him through the body. I got up and, being maddened with pain from my hand being lacerated by the teeth of the fellow whom I had grappled with, I was soon once more in the thickest of the *melee* fighting with fury. The enemy were, however, at last defeated, and the entrenchments cleared. Having once more formed our ranks, the General ordered us to storm a battery of twelve guns, which was galling us on our right. We were formed in sections of companies and then we prepared to storm the twelve gun battery. In double quick time we hurried on, but ere we could reach it, it blew up with a tremendous explosion. The shock was truly awful and astounding: the ground shook around us. It was terrific beyond description. We were completely covered with dust, whilst fragments of human bodies, with pieces of wood, stones, &c. came down amongst us whereby a few were killed and a great many wounded. Our gallant and brave General was struck from his horse, as was also Col. Gibb. The contending armies, as if by mutual consent, ceased firing. *We* thought the French had sprung a mine; while *they*, on the other hand, supposed that our waggons of ammunition had blown up. The explosion, however, proceeded from neither of those causes, but was produced by the following circumstance. The grenadier company of the 59th regi-

ment, with a few officers, rushed into the battery, carrying and surmounting every obstacle before them, and made themselves masters of the place. An Artillery officer who commanded the battery snatched a burning match from the hand of one of the Artillerymen, and threw it into the powder magazine, thus devoting himself to destruction to prevent the battery he commanded passing into the hands of his opponents. This officer's name was Muller, and he was either a Dutchman or a German. The smoke being partially dispelled, we could plainly perceive the faces of our enemies in front of us. A volley from our Rifles was instantly sent amongst them, and then another and another; but not without a return from the enemy. We did not, however, continue long firing, the word was given to charge bayonets, and onward we went to close combat. In this charge we encountered a Malay Regiment, composed of fine athletic fellows, in bodily appearance somewhat resembling Scotch Highlanders, and like them also undaunted in the battle field. When within a few paces of these brave fellows we halted, to take breath, and found them closing up their ranks, by filling up the vacancies caused by our shot. Time was precious—the bugle, therefore, once more sounded the charge. We drove their arms aside, and the next moment our swords and bayonets were deeply dyed in blood. Again, and again we charged, until the ill fated Malay Regiment was literally cut to pieces. We now halted a short time to recover our

exhausted energies, and during the time, I took a survey of the horrid work we had been about. I asked a brave fellow who was alongside of me, and who had served in many previous campaigns, if he had ever beheld such dreadful execution. He said to me, "I have fought at the battle of Maida in Calabria, in the second battalion of the 78th Regiment, and in Egypt with the same Regiment, when that corps was taken prisoners by the Turks, after loosing about three fourths of their number, but I must confess I have never seen any thing like this, and it is not yet nearly over. Many poor fellows must sleep to wake no more ere the tri-coloured flag, that waves in yonder fort, falls," at the same time pointing with his finger to Cornelius. He then expressed a desire for something to quench his thirst, and as I had my canteen full I gave him a part. I then took a part of it myself, which in the act of doing so I observed a poor wounded fellow eying me very wistfully and to him I gave the remainder. There was a Dutch Regiment lying upon our flank which seemed to be in commotion, and our General suspecting that they were preparing to attack us ordered us to march up briskly upon them. Having got within one hundred paces of them, they threw down their arms, took off their caps and cheered us. They were all taken prisoners, and sent to the rear with a small escort. General Gillespie then addressed us saying, "My brave fellows there stands the enemy's park of Artillery, it must be taken." To get to the rear of these cannon

was our object, and if possible, to do so unperceived. We gained the rear, but not without being perceived, being so well guarded by the French troops. We poured into them a most destructive fire, and without waiting to re-load our pieces we charged and drove them back. Again we formed our ranks as well as the circumstances and the nature of the ground would admit, and poured in another destructive fire,—and then a second charge. We obtained possession of a part of the park of Artillery, but what was our astonishment to find a fresh Regiment of the enemy drawn up in open columns of companies on our right flank. We were instantly ordered to load a-fresh. The enemy formed quickly; but ere they could level a musket at us, our balls made large gaps in their ranks. The last charge I ever heard General Gillespie give, was: “now death or glory my boys! forward again, let steel meet steel and down they go to everlasting sleep.” Onward we went to the charge; but the enemy did not remain to meet it. They threw down their arms, and fled and the park of Artillery was ours. In this last conflict I may say, without exaggeration, that we were entirely enveloped in flame and smoke from the constant and heavy fire from the enemy’s guns. A Sepoy Regiment belonging to our army was almost entirely annihilated by the murderous discharges of the cannon. Previous to the capture of the park of Artillery, I fell, pierced by a grape shot from one of the cannon. My blood

spouted up in my face, my cap was torn from my head, and my rifle was dashed to pieces in my hands.
 Yours, &c. THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XVI.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

HAVING recovered from the shock caused by my wounds, I looked around for some person to assist me and tie up my wounds; but I could see no one who was capable of performing that friendly office for me. The surviving men of my company were in hot pursuit of the enemy; and the wounded, who lay in heaps around, perhaps stood as much in need of assistance as I did. Seeing no one to help me, I had to do the best I could for myself. Accordingly, I took the sash off a serjeant who lay dead by my side, with which I bound up a wound in my arm. The other two wounds I could not bind up, so I was obliged to allow them to take their chance. After having continued some little time there amongst the killed and wounded, I got up, and asked some of those who were comparatively slightly wounded to go along with me and look out for a surgeon; they, however, one and all refused, stating that they were safer where they were as the fighting was not yet ended, and that if I went I had every chance of

being killed. I nevertheless went away in pursuit of a surgeon to dress my wounds; but I had not gone far when I found myself getting faint from the loss of blood, and felt myself altogether unable to proceed without assistance, when fortunately, an officer (who I afterwards found to be Captain Wetherall,* aid-de-camp to his father, Gen. Wetherall the second in command of the army,) passing by, and observing my situation, humanely rendered me the assistance I so much stood in need of. He not only bound up my wounds, but likewise conveyed me to a place of greater safety than where I then was. This was one of a number of pits, which had been dug by the enemy in front of their works as a protection against a night attack. This brave and humane officer, having placed me safely in the bottom of the pit, departed. He had not been gone three minutes, when a shot struck the side of the pit and nearly covered me with dust, and a few stones also fell upon my head, but without doing me any material injury. I remained nearly ten minutes longer in that place, when I observed a soldier passing whom I requested to assist me out, which he did. I once more endeavoured to

* The officer above mentioned, is Lieut.-Colonel Wetherall now commanding the Royals, in Montreal. Feeling certain that the Colonel was the same officer who acted so humanely towards me in India, I waited upon and remembered him of the circumstance. The Colonel immediately recollected it, and expressed his satisfaction at again seeing me, at the same time said, that if he could forward my views in any way, he would feel most happy in doing so.

make my way to the hospital, along with an officer who now made up to me. This officer had his arm almost shot off from his shoulder, and it was hanging useless at his side, attached to his body by a mere thread. In making our way to the hospital we had to see a most melancholy sight—Col. Campbell, of our Regiment, lying wounded, having lost one leg and the other nearly off. His faithful steed lay expiring by the side of his master, determined in life or in death not to forsake him. A tear fell from my eye to behold the good old Colonel—indeed, I may truly say, the father of our Regiment—lying helpless as an infant, unable to move a joint of his body without the most excruciating pain. Alas! a tear was the only tribute I had to bestow, “this is sad work,” I said, to the officer who was with me, on seeing around us so many dead and wounded both of friends and foes. “True,” said he, “but it is the fate of war.” The enemy fought bravely; and had the Dutch shown the same courage as the French and Malays, the British flag would not have been seen waving upon the walls of their boasted impregnable Cornelius. After walking about half an hour, we came up with a few pioneers carrying masheels and palanquins, to carry the wounded men from the field of battle to the general hospital. A masheel is something like a hammock. It is made fast at both ends to long poles, and is generally carried by four men. A palanquin, on the other hand, is formed of thin boards, and is also carried by men.

The officer who was along with me, and I, got into two of these masheels and away they went with us towards the hospital. On coming to the trench we had stormed in the morning, my foremost bearers stumbled, and I was thrown out and fell into the bottom of the trench. At first I thought every bone in my body had been broken, I was so much shook, although, ultimately, I found that I had received but little injury. An officer of the 22d Light Dragoons who had observed me fall, struck the bearers with the flat of his sword, and that with such right good will, that I am sure the effects of it must have continued for at least a month after. I felt sorry for the poor fellows, as I am sure that what happened was purely accidental on their part. I was in a short time once more placed in my masheel, and again progressed towards the hospital. My bearers, however, instead of carrying me to the general hospital, landed me at a gentleman's house which had been converted into an hospital for those who were most severely wounded. Having been placed in a large room, I was much shocked to see so many brave fellows, lying on the floor severely wounded, with two or three surgeons cutting and slashing and lopping off their limbs. My own wounds being in a bad state, I called to one of the surgeons and, asked him to examine them. He came forward and began to examine the wound in my arm, but while he was in the act of doing so three French officers were brought in wounded, and he immediately left me, without

doing any thing for me, in order to attend to these officers. You may be sure I did not feel over well pleased with this treatment, and began to abuse the surgeon sharply for using me in this manner. The only answer I received was an order to go down to the general hospital, and get my arm amputated. This, in my opinion, did not mend matters, and I abused him still more than before. There was, however, no remedy, and I accordingly set off to find my way to the general hospital. I had not proceeded far when I was taken into a palanquin, in which I was conveyed until I reached the bungalow occupied by Major F. of our Regiment, whose servant hailed me and took me to the Major, who was anxious to hear particulars of the storming of Cornelius, he himself not having been present in consequence of indisposition. When I came into the Major's presence he could scarcely recognize me, I was so covered with gore. He asked me if it was all my own blood. I said some part of it was that of our enemies; but that I was wounded in three different places—that we had had dreadful work, the French having disputed every inch of ground—and that the slaughter had been immense. I felt extremely faint from the loss of blood, and told the Major so; but before I could get any assistance, I fell upon the floor quite insensible. After I had recovered, the Major asked me what occasioned the terrible explosion which occurred during the storming. I told him that it was caused by the blowing up of one of

the enemy's batteries, which we were about to attack, and which was blown up by the officer in charge of it, to prevent it from falling into our hands. The Major then asked if the 78th had suffered much. I said that it could not but have suffered severely, although I could not tell the extent of its loss. I, at the same time, mentioned, that I believed Colonel Campbell was by that time no more, as I had seen him in a dreadfully mangled condition, having one of his legs shot off, and the other nearly in the same state. He seemed much affected when he understood that the Regiment had suffered so much, and at the loss of the Colonel, and I observed him wiping the tears from his eyes. At this time his servant entered, and informed the Major that a carriage was coming down from the field. He desired the servant to go instantly and enquire if it could take W. to the general hospital, as it was most probably going thither. There were three French officers in the carriage, and they very politely made room for me, and I was placed in the carriage. One of the officers spoke very good English. He told me that he had been attacked by three Sepoys, and would most certainly have been killed by them, had not a British soldier interfered, and at the risk of his own life, saved him from their fury. This soldier was, as I afterwards learned, a corporal of our Regiment of the name of Cooper. We now arrived at the general hospital, where we separated. I went into an apartment which was crowded with the wounded, and the sur-

geons busily employed attending to their different wants. It was a scene which no one who had looked upon could ever forget, and was much too shocking for description. The surgeon to whom I applied for assistance, belonged to one of the ships of war which had accompanied the expedition. He immediately attended to me, and having probed the wound in my arm, he extracted from it a piece of my jacket and shirt and then began to dress it, from which I received almost immediate relief. He next attended to the wound in my thigh, from which he extracted a piece of Dutch copper money. I requested him to give me the piece; but he would not part with it, saying that he wished to show it to the Commander-in-Chief. Having dressed the wound in my thigh, he applied himself to that in my ankle, which he told me was very slight, and that a few days would heal it up. I was then taken to another ward, and a bed being got for me, I was put into it and left to repose, of which I stood much in need. Yours,
&c. THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XVII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

HAVING slept soundly for several hours I awoke greatly refreshed. The ward in which I was placed

might contain between fifty and sixty men more or less wounded. Upon casting my eyes about, and observing the situation of the poor fellows beside me, I could not avoid exclaiming to myself, "is it for this end that parents bring up their children, with all the tenderness and care that paternal affection can bestow. What if, when on its mother's knees, attempting in childish innocence to lisp out papa and mamma, it should be told the parents that that child, so fondly loved, would at no distant day leave his bones to whiten on the plains of a foreign land; or what is perhaps still worse, return to his native land mangled and torn with wounds, a wretched wreck of his former self." Would not those parents, in the bitterness of their heart, exclaim, "it were better for thee, my son, that thou hadst never been born." A loud groan here attracted my attention. It proceeded from a bed opposite to mine. The soul of another brave fellow had winged its way to its last account. Another widowed mother had to mourn the loss of an only and beloved child. Whilst I was ruminating over the fate of this poor fellow, some one called me to assist him, as he was bleeding to death. I made what haste I could, and went to him, and found the sheet of the bed completely saturated with blood. I attempted to stop the bleeding by binding up the wound tightly with a napkin, but without effect—the blood still continuing to flow. I am afraid, my poor fellow, I can do you no good, you must have the assistance of the surgeon, and for-

tunately one at this moment came into the ward, who immediately applied the necessary remedies to stop the bleeding. His wound, however, afterwards mortified, and the man had to get his leg amputated. Shortly after, I was startled by a piercing shriek from some one in the ward. It proceeded from a wounded man who had some how or other fallen from his bed upon the floor. In consequence of the fall, his wound burst open afresh, and before any assistance could be procured he bled to death.

The next morning I awoke considerably refreshed, and although my wounds felt stiff and sore I was sufficiently recovered to allow of my going out of doors. I accordingly went out and directed my steps towards a river that run by the back of the hospital. The scene, however, was not one calculated to compose my agitated spirits, as the river, which was much swollen, was almost covered with the dead bodies of men and horses. I therefore turned from the sight, and directed my steps elsewhere; but it seemed that nothing but melancholy objects should meet my view, as I now came to the place where graves were preparing for the reception of the bodies of twelve of my fellow soldiers, who had died in the hospital of their wounds. Finding nothing in the surrounding scene at all adapted to cheer my troubled mind, I returned once more to my apartment in the hospital. Amongst those who had died of their wounds, and for whom the graves were preparing, I found three belonging to the 78th. At the death

of two of them, I was not at all surprised, their wounds were so bad; but I was a good deal astonished at the death of the other, as I thought his wounds were slight. He himself, however, had always a presentiment that he would die in the Island of Java, and nothing could drive the idea out of his head. The day before he died, thinking he was doing well, I began to joke him upon it, and said I hoped he was now convinced that he was wrong in his idea that he would die at the taking of Java. He said to me, stop until to-morrow and you will see whether I am wrong or not. My old opponent G. also died in the hospital at this time of the wounds which he had received at the taking of Cornelius, thus by his death wiping away the stigma of cowardice. Although this man had been the cause of my being reduced from the rank of a serjeant, I felt sorry for his death. The wound which he had received was in the knee, and the surgeon wished to amputate his leg, but he would not consent. A locked jaw ensued, which caused his death. Scarcely a day passed at this time without some one falling a victim, either of the wounds they had received or of dysentery, which at that time prevailed, to a considerable extent, amongst the troops; and there were not a few whose deaths were brought on by their own intemperance and dissipation.

To those who were in a fair way of recovery, the rations allowed in the hospital were by no means sufficient. A few of us, therefore, clubbed together to get an additional allowance, but nothing was

permitted to enter the hospital without being inspected by the serjeant of the guard. We, however, contrived to get what we wanted, through the instrumentality of one of our number who swam the river, which flowed immediately at the back of the hospital, going out and coming in again at a back door; but we had not continued to enjoy ourselves in this way many days, when some one envious of our enjoyment gave information to the visiting surgeon, who took occasion to make his rounds a good deal earlier than usual, and found me busy preparing for our mess. Observing what I was about, he came up to me, and perceiving a strong smell of arrack, he kicked the kettle from off the fire, threw it into the river, and walked away. I then went down along the side of the river, expecting that the kettle would be stopped by some brushwood about fifty paces below, and in this I was not mistaken, and I soon got it out again. We continued to enjoy ourselves for a considerable time longer, but our money at last began to fail, and we were obliged to put ourselves on half allowance. A few days before our money was wholly spent, we were a second time caught by the visiting surgeon who, with a few oaths, took the kettle from its place, poured its contents upon the ground, and then smashed it to pieces. I could not stand the loss coolly, and I spoke out very freely to the surgeon about his conduct, for which he threatened to report me. However he did not do so. Not long after this, Lord Minto with his staff visited the hos-

pital. He inquired at each man in our ward how he was getting on, and if he had any complaint to make. There was not a single individual who did not complain of the smallness of his rations, and that there was neither arrack nor wine served out to them; and as it fortunately was dinner-time when his Lordship was with us, we were enabled to exhibit the scantiness of our allowance. His Lordship immediately ordered that we should, in future, have double our former allowance, and each man to have half a pint of wine per day. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XVIII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

FROM the foregoing detail you will perceive that the life of a soldier, at least when on active service, is not that life of idleness which many are apt to suppose. Indeed there are few who enter the army who have any proper idea of the nature of the service. Very many, I believe, enter from no other motive than idleness and a disinclination to work; but they are not long in finding out their mistake. The hardships which these afterwards encounter is nothing more than what they deserve.

About a week after the event mentioned in my last letter, our Regiment received orders to embark at Batavia for a place called Sourabaya. Previous to our embarkation we were to receive our arrears of pay. Although I was wounded, and in the meantime disabled from service, I knew I was entitled to my arrears of pay as well as the others; but although it wanted only two days of the embarkation there was no appearance of a settlement taking place. I therefore requested, and obtained from the Doctor, a pass to go to the place where the regiment was stationed, which was about two miles further up the country. I went directly to the officer of my company to enquire of him if I was to get my arrears of pay, and if so, at what time they were to be paid; and in answer, he informed me I would be paid that evening. Upon that assurance I departed from him, and went to seek out some of my old comrades to spend an hour or two with them, before their departure to Sourabaya. We had been but a short time together, when a serjeant of the company came in and told me that I was to be taken to the guard house and confined by order of the Lieut. I inquired what crime I was accused of. He said of insolence to the Lieut.; and that I was not solitary, for that two other men, of the names of Harvey and Munroe, were also accused of the same crime, and likewise ordered to be confined. I was immediately marched to the guard house, and, along with the other two, consigned to durance vile for the remainder of that day and the ensuing

night. The next morning the Regiment was paraded to witness the punishment of a man who had been sentenced to be flogged. It is usual on these occasions to bring out all the prisoners who are confined either in the guard house or black hole to witness the punishment. Of course, Harvey, Munro and I were brought out on this occasion. Colonel Lindsay, who then commanded the Regiment, when he saw us brought out as prisoners, came forward and asked for what offence we had been put into confinement. I said I was not aware that I had committed any offence that deserved confinement in the black hole for twenty-four hours. "By whose authority were you confined in the black hole?" asked Colonel Lindsay. "By Lieutenant M'Kenzie's," I replied. The Colonel then called for Lieutenant M'Kenzie, and asked him what offence I had committed. M'Kenzie coolly replied that he knew nothing about it; but that the sergeant who had put me in confinement would, perhaps, be able to answer the question. The sergeant being called said, that he had confined Harvey, Munro and W. by order of Lieutenant M'Kenzie, for insolence towards him. M'Kenzie said, the sergeant was wrong. He had desired him to put Harvey and Munro, but not W. into confinement, for insolence to him when asking for their arrears of pay. Upon this statement the Colonel ordered us all three to return to the hospital, and told us that our arrears of pay would be sent us that night. I thereupon told the Colonel, that as I had

been confined without a cause, I would not allow the matter to drop, but that I would acquaint the General with the harsh usage I had met with from Lieutenant M'Kenzie. The Colonel then turned to the Lieutenant, and said "M'Kenzie, I am afraid this will turn out a bad business for you. It was highly improper to order a wounded man to be confined in the black hole, more especially as he had not, by your own confession, committed any offence. I am afraid a General Court Martial will be the result." Upon this I came away along with my two fellow sufferers, and returned to the hospital. According to promise, that evening we received the full amount of our arrears of pay. Next day Colonel Lindsay and Lieutenant M'Kenzie came to me in the hospital, when the Colonel said to me "I hope W. you will think no more about the mistake that was committed in confining you, and allow it to rest as it is without acquainting the General, as the Regiment, is much esteemed by the General, and I would wish to avoid anything that might tend to lower it in his opinion. You know I have always been your friend, and if you allow the matter to drop you shall not repent it." I agreed to the Colonel's request, and gave up all idea of reporting the Lieut. to the General. The Colonel said to me, "when you are fit to do duty in the Regiment you shall be replaced in your former rank."

Two days after the transactions above noticed had taken place, I found the wound in my arm getting

more painful than formerly, and much swollen. The surgeon upon examining it, ordered a rice poultice to be applied to it; still I found no relief, in fact, the pain was greatly increased. A consultation was held by the medical gentlemen, and it seemed to be the general opinion that amputation would be necessary. One of the surgeons, however, said that he could, by an operation, save the arm, if I would trust myself to his care. I very thankfully accepted his offer, and submitted myself to his direction. He immediately commenced operations and laid open the wound by cutting out a piece of putrified flesh. The wound, when thus laid open, was by no means an agreeable sight, and I will not trouble you with a description of its loathsome appearance. Red precipitate was then applied to the wound, which caused me great pain for some time, but in the course of forty-eight hours, after the wound was thus cleansed and properly dressed, I began to experience much relief, and from day to day thereafter, my arm continued to mend, although it never has, as yet, been entirely cured. I could never attribute the bad state my wound had got into, to any other cause than the cold, caught on the night I was confined in the black hole; and when the kind of place I was confined in is considered, the consequences to me are not much to be wondered at. The black hole or dungeon in which I was incarcerated was underneath the guard house, about six feet deep, entirely under ground, and quite impervious to the light, and we had not even a little

straw allowed us to keep our bodies from coming in contact with the damp and noxious earth, when we lay down to rest. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XIX.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I SHALL NOW give you a narrative of the events that occurred at the taking of the Island of Java, subsequent to my being wounded. The enemy being driven from all their batteries and entrenchments at the point of the bayonet, retreated to Cornelius; but not so quickly but that the British were enabled to enter it at the same time and to drive them from that, their last retreat, which they had deemed impregnable. The enemy again drew up in order of battle, in rear of the fortress. The Commander-in-Chief of the British army, called out his whole disposable force in order, once more to give battle to the enemy. When preparing to march forward for that purpose, a flag of truce was seen advancing, who brought an offer of capitulation from the French Commander, which was accepted of. By the capitulation the French soldiers became prisoners of war, the officers being put on their parole, whilst the Dutch and Malays were allowed to

return to their homes. We thus, in a comparatively short period of time, were enabled to wrest from French usurpation one of the finest Islands of the East. This, however, was not accomplished without a very serious loss on the part of Great Britain, both of blood and treasure.

When the conquest had been completed, an order was issued by the Commander-in-Chief that all the wounded soldiers should be inspected by a medical board; that those who were unfit for farther duty were to be invalided, and those who were not considered unfit for service were to continue with their respective Regiments. The wounded of our Regiment were ordered to embark at Batavia, for Sourabaya, to join the Regiment which lay there. In ten days after our embarkation, we landed at our destined port and joined our Regiment; but few of us did any more duty in the corps. We had nothing to do but to enjoy ourselves as we pleased. The town of Sourabaya, where we were now quartered, contained about eighteen hundred inhabitants, consisting of Dutch, Malays and Chinese. The former are a phlegmatic and reserved set of people, extremely cleanly in their habits. The Chinese are of a more lively turn of mind. They are much addicted to gambling—chess and cock-fighting are their constant amusements. They are notorious cheats; and it may be truly said, that a European has but one eye while a Chinese has two. There is no set of people in the East who have more cunning and duplicity;

and they make it an invariable rule to cheat where it can be possibly done. Their complexion is of a yellowish hue, and their eyes are deep sunk in the head, which makes them appear as being half shut.

I shall now endeavour to give you an account of some of the notions which these people entertain respecting the Deity, and of their account of the Fall of Man.

The religion of the Chinese is Pagan; but the ideas they have concerning the Deity are greatly superior to most other Pagans. The books, which, as I was informed, treat of their religion are Chu-King, Siang, Sang-y-King, Takis, with a few more which it is unnecessary to mention. They have a belief in more gods than one. The Supreme God they name Chang-tee, Tien, and sometimes Yao. In one of their books it is written that "Chang-tee is a self-existent unity, who is present every where, and who produces all things by his own power. He is from all eternity without interruption. He is uncreated and new. He is the source of all motion and the root of all action. If it be asked what he does, he is eternally active. If you would know where he is, he exists every where." In another of their books it is said, "that the heaven and the earth are of an immense height, yet they have figure, colour, number and quantity." Again, if one should ask how all these things came, the answer is, "that all were made by the great God who is the origin of all created substances, whether they be heavenly or whether they pertain to

the world we live in. He who knows this Sovereign Being, knows much; and he who knows not him, knows nothing. God is so high, that he cannot be reached,—so profound, that he cannot be fathomed,—so immense, that he cannot be measured,—immutable, and cannot change,—indivisible, without part or form; yet he exists entirely every where; even in the minutest thing in creation. It was this Almighty Being who produced the mountains and the great deep,—who makes the animals walk,—the birds fly,—the sun shine,—and the stars move, and holds the earth in his hands.” In the book called Y-King, it is said that Chang-tee, or Sovereign Lord, is just and good, full of mercy and love for his creatures;—that his justice is love and his punishments are mercies. That when the hour of executing his decrees arrives, none will be able to resist him. He will then show that when he punishes he is just and good, and that he never acts from vindictiveness nor hatred. To render the good happy and to punish the wicked, is his constant rule; and when he punishes he only seems to be in wrath, for justice demands the punishment of the violator of the laws of nature.” In the book called Chu-King, it is written, “that besides the Supreme God there is a being who is said to be the minister of Chang-tee, and is called the holy saint. His different names are Vinwang, the prince of peace; Chingin, the divine man; Changgin, god-man; Tien-tee-song, the sovereign lord; Kiun-tee, son of the King; Kigin, son of Heaven. The

saint or great man, wants in himself all the virtues of heaven and earth. The saint made the heavens; the great man made the universe. Tien is the saint without a voice,—the saint is Tien speaking with the human voice. The heart of the Sovereign Lord is in the breast of the saint. The counsels and the rebukes of Heaven are in the mouth of the saint. He has the form of a man; and the heaven and the earth are united in him. He has the form of a man, but is without his passions.” In the book called Siang-Sang, it is said that “the Divine Man made the heaven and the earth and all created intelligence, and that he existed from everlasting.” In the Chi-King, it is stated that “it is he who converts the hearts,—and is the beginning of all things;—that he is expected to appear in this world and will establish it in righteousness. When he comes into this world he will labour much and suffer much; he must pass the great torrent whose waves will enter into his soul. That he alone can offer up to Chang-te the sacrifice worthy of him.” In the same book, it is said that “the people sacrifice their lives for bread; but the saint sacrifices his life for the world. He asks nothing for himself—he seeks only the happiness of others;—he enriches others, but impoverishes himself; he loses himself to save mankind. The Lord will restore man to his primitive virtue. Vinwang, the prince of Peace, alone knows how to love his brethren. Yao has enriched him with all his riches: and has given him the universe for a recompense. The Lord said

to Vinwang, ascend to the sacred mountain and draw all the world after you. Conquer the rebels who dispute my sovereign will. Arm thyself with my wrath, display my standard, draw out my troops, restore peace every where, and fix the happiness of thy empire. Vinwang gained the summit of the mountain and the rebellious spirits fled to the caverns—the mountain of the Lord was no place for them. Living waters, running pure from the fountain, became the property of Vinwang and his followers, to quench their thirst. Vinwang has chosen the mountain for his abode; and thither must all the faithful nations of the earth go.”

The account of the Fall of Man is thus given in their books:—“When the first man and woman had been created they were placed upon the mountain above spoken of. The mountain was at that time extremely fruitful; but by the apostacy of the first pair, it was rendered barren and unfruitful.” The following is the lamentation of Vinwang on account of the fall:—“Tinwang (the name of the first man) has plunged us into numberless miseries—he is the cause of the unfruitfulness of this formerly delightful country—he hath overturned our house—he hath filled our country with thorns and briars—our misery will last for many ages—the mountain is lost for a long period of time—vice will overcome all like a mortal poison. We possessed fertile fields and fruitful seasons, now all is lost, Oh! Tinwang, what hast thou done? But Tinwang says, he could not help

it,—it was Poasee, his wife, who did it. She hated innocence and loved vice—by her ambition to gain knowledge she has destroyed the bulwarks I had raised to protect us—our misery has not come from Tien, but from a woman. Ah! unhappy Poasee, you have kindled the conflagration which will consume us. On me let Tien pour out his vengeance; I am to blame. One of the degraded spirits hath deceived me, and I am undone. But Vinwang, full of mercy and pity, hath said that after many ages he will destroy the destroyer Chong-chong. This rebellious and perverse *dragon* shall suffer for his pride and presumption. His ambition blinded him. He would have mounted up to heaven, but I threw him down to the abyss below. At first his abode was in the high places; but he forgot himself, and he lost eternal life. That night when he fell, the stars lost their accustomed lustre. Ten suns were then seen in the heavens that pretended to enlighten the celestial sphere. Yas ordered Vinwang to pierce them with his darts. He wounded nine; and nine ravens, that dwelt in them, had their wings clipped. Yas ordered one of the celestial spirits to drive Chong-chong into the black valley of misery.—Tchi-y-con, another of the degraded spirits, raised a great storm and endeavoured to rob the celestial army of all light. Te-wang, however, bound him to his chariot.” It is further stated in the same book, that “Chong-chong has the face of a man, with the body of a serpent, and that he is all lies and deceit.

This degraded being disputed empire with the Sovereign Lord of the universe; and, while raging with fury, he struck his head against a mountain; in consequence the pillars of heaven were broken, and thus the position of the earth became oblique." In the book called Chu-King, it is said that "the soul of man was originally luminous, but that it became obscured after the apostacy of the first pair." It also states that "when any one supposes himself possessed of virtue, it is a sure indication that he is altogether without it: the truly wise and virtuous are always humble, and believe themselves incapable of any good or virtuous action, although always ardent in their aspirations after good, as if they thought themselves capable of performing every good action." The Sovereign Lord, addressing Vinwang, said, "I love a pure and single spirit like thine. It makes no noise—it does not dazzle from without—it is not forward nor proud. In seeing thee, one would say that thou hast no light or knowledge. Thou, however, conformest thyself to my orders. I hate the proud; but I love the humble. I shall always dwell in thy heart, for thou art all loveliness." Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XX.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOU ask me if I ever had an opportunity of seeing any of the Chinese females, and in answer I

may state, that on one occasion I did get a sight of some of these females, I shall now relate to you my adventures on the occasion in question.

One evening while strolling along the banks of the Jacara river, which flows pleasantly past the town of Sourabaya I met two of my comrades, who asked me to go along with them and partake of a glass of arrack. After a little hesitation I agreed to do so, and accordingly went along with them. We had no difficulty in finding a grog shop, and in we went. Having drunk a couple of glasses each, one of my companions, who was rather of an amorous disposition and at the same time a little of a wag, proposed that we should endeavour to pick up a Chinese sweetheart a-piece, that evening, I said that would be rather difficult, as the Chinese females never were to be seen by Europeans. He said he would ask the landlord to put us upon a plan. He accordingly called the landlord and put the question to him. "Yes, yes Mynheer," replied the landlord, "you shall see de Chinese frow." Having paid our reckoning we sallied forth upon our adventures accompanied by our Dutch landlord. We had not proceeded far when a house was pointed out to us by our guide, as one where we would meet with what we wanted. The house was surrounded by a wall, composed partly of stone and partly of mud. We could get no entrance by the door. Our only alternative then, was to make an attempt to scale the wall, and the Dutchman having procured a ladder for us, we all, with the exception

of himself who left us, mounted the wall at the lowest part. Having got to the top, we perceived within a square court, five females, two of them with children in their arms. They did not seem to be at all alarmed or displeased at our appearance, but came forward and began speaking and laughing; but we could not understand one word of what they said. It was now proposed by one of my companions that we should descend into the court. I objected to this; but it was of no use, for down the other two would go. They hauled up the ladder from the outside and placed it inside the wall to enable them to descend to where the females were. The two then descended, and I remained upon the wall as a sentry. It was certainly amusing to hear the parties talking to each other all at the same time without the one being able to comprehend the other. The one who was the first proposer of the frolic, had a wooden leg, and he carried a large stick, in order that he might the better keep his balance, and it was certainly a laughable sight to see him stumping along with one of the Chinese girls waddling after him, holding by his arm. She pointed out the different fruit trees to him, and made signs to him to eat. The difficulty, however, was to get at the fruit; at last they resolved to make use of the ladder. When they came for it, they found that I had taken it up, and refused to let it go for the purpose they wanted. At last, however, they persuaded me not only to allow the ladder to go, but also to join them in the garden. We then began

to gather the fruit, of which we eat abundantly. One of my companions endeavoured to make love to one of the girls in the best manner he could; and in the course of his attempt, he kissed her repeatedly which caused the other girls to laugh very heartily. In the midst of our enjoyment a male servant, belonging to the family, made his appearance, and snatching up a piece of a bamboo hurried towards us, brandishing his stick, aimed a blow at the head of the one who had been kissing the girl; but he warded off the blow, and immediately knocked the fellow down, who roared out most loudly in his own language, something which I think signified "*murder.*" Immediately upon the appearance of the servant, the girls hobbled off as fast as their little feet would carry them. We also considered it high time for us to retreat. We, therefore, with the assistance of the ladder, got once more into the street, and got off, leaving the ladder behind us, making the best of our way to the old Dutchman's house, where we took another glass to refresh ourselves after our frolic. The Dutchman, after we had told him our adventures, laughed very heartily, and said, "you English are de tevil for de frow." The owner of the place where we had our frolic, who was a Chinese merchant, went to the commanding officer and complained; stating, that three soldiers had entered his premises, over the wall, with the intention of carrying off his daughters, and that they had nearly killed one of his servants, and that he wished them to be punished. The officer desired

him to go amongst the men, and pick out the guilty ones, and he would punish them severely. This he could not do as he had never seen us, and he was obliged to go away very much dissatisfied. It was pretty well known in the Regiment who were the transgressors, and many a laugh it created afterwards amongst officers and privates.

The Chinese women are of very small stature, and whiter in the complexion than the men. Their feet are also very small. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXI.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE Island of Java contains some millions of inhabitants, but the exact number I cannot tell. The original inhabitants go under the name of Javanese, and they are idolaters. Besides the Javanese there are numbers of Malays, Chinese, Portugese, and different other kinds of people. The Dutch are masters of the whole Island, and subject all the other inhabitants to taxation. The Malays profess the religion of Mahomet; but they are not so strict in their religious observances as the Turks. They perform frequent ablutions either in the rivers or baths. They observe their fasts by abstaining from meats from sunrise till

sunset. They avoid intoxicating liquors, but are immoderate in the use of opium, which they take as a substitute. They circumcise their children at the age of thirteen. They are, generally speaking, remarkably sedate in their manner, and speak very little. A Frenchman will speak more in one day than a Malay will do in a week. The Malay in personal appearance, is handsome, of a stout make, but of a gloomy and ferocious physiognomy, and jealousy is a predominant passion. Should the wife of a Malay give her husband cause to suspect her inconstancy, he never rests till he finds out the paramour. He then intoxicates himself with a composition of opium, takes his poisoned cress or dagger, and off he starts for the abode of the unfortunate wretch who is the object of his vengeance. It is no matter what the distance may be, or whether it is in town or country. Having found the object of his wrath, he plunges the deadly weapon into his breast or throat. It has occurred in Java, that a whole family has fallen a sacrifice to the jealous fury of one man. The act is called the running of the Muke. Whenever it becomes known to the Dutch police, that such a thing is to take place, a strict watch is set upon the person who is suspected, and when he sets out on his mission of death he is followed, and before he has time to do any mischief, he gets his brains knocked out.

Peace was once more established in the island, and every thing restored to its former quiet. The

women who had been left at Goa, now arrived at Sourabaya; but not a few of them were fated to find their husbands numbered with the dead. You may, perhaps, suppose that those women who had lost their husbands were rendered very wretched and were much to be pitied, but it is not so. The scenes to which they become accustomed, in following the army, too often deadens the feelings and renders them quite callous. Indeed many of them, in less than a month after their arrival, were married again. Although this is generally the case, it does not always apply; and it often happens that there are amongst them, some who are truly wretched. One instance I will relate. Upon the landing of the women at Sourabaya, there was one who was looking anxiously around for her husband, and not seeing him she said to one of the soldiers, whom she knew to be a comrade of her husband, "where is O'Neil that he does not come to welcome me, and press to his heart this dear child whom he has never seen?" He could not answer her; but a tear which bedimed his bronzed cheek was too sure an indication that he could not satisfy her of the safety of her husband. The poor woman too well understood from his silence, that her husband, the father of her infant, was no more. She, with a piercing cry, fell into the arms of the soldier, in a state of total insensibility, from which she recovered after a short interval, to a full sense of the reality of her affliction. Another scene occurred at this time, but of a mirthful character. An old female cam-

paigner came forward from amongst the females, crying out "whare is my man, I ken he is no killed yet, for mony a battle he has been in and aye cam aff hale scart?" "Here, I am," cried a good old soldier belonging to the Rifles, bouncing forward from among the crowd, and pointing at the same time to his wooden leg, "the French, you see, have put me under the necessity of using a timber-toe for the rest of my life." "Weel, thank God," said the old woman, "I hae wished for this these twenty years. Faith, Johnny lad, I'll get you back to Glasgow soon; forby you'll get a gude pension as lang as you live." She was very right in her anticipation of a good pension, as he received two shillings and one penny half-penny a day, his service having been long in India. Another occurrence, very different from either of the foregoing, now took place. A soldier of the name of F—— came forward, and said very coolly to his wife, "where are my children?" Two children then stept forward, whom he carressed in a most affectionate manner, and taking one in each hand went towards the barracks, followed by his wife abusing him all the way in most unmeasured terms. The reason of this strange conduct of the man towards his wife, I was afterwards given to understand by himself, to have been as follows:—Having served for a number of years in the 73d Regt. he, through the influence of General Agnew, received his discharge. He soon after went to Madras and set up business as a tailor. He had not, been long settled there, when

he had reason to suspect his wife of infidelity to the marriage vow. In order, if possible, to acquire proof that his suspicions were correct, he told his wife that he was under the necessity of going to a place fifteen miles from Madras, and that he would not return for a day or two. He then left the house, as if to proceed on his journey. He returned, however, late in the evening, and having quietly gained admission to the house, he proceeded to his wife's bedroom, where he found her in bed with another man. He very coolly desired the man to get up and leave the house; which he immediately did. He then addressed his guilty wife, and told her that the connexion which had existed between them was virtually dissolved by her improper conduct, and that she could not expect to live any longer with him. He remained that night and the night following in the house, and having received what money was due to him by his customers, which, with what he was before possessed of, made a good round sum, he departed in a country vessel for Bombay. Having landed and taken up his abode in that city, he began to frequent low gambling houses, and in a short time he was stript of every rupee. He had now no resource but to enlist, and accordingly he once more became a soldier in the 78th Regiment. His quondam wife having heard where he was now to be found, sold all of which she was possessed and embarked with her children, four girls and one boy, in order to join him. The vessel in which she embarked from Madras took fire, and their being no chance of saving it, the boats

were lowered in order to endeavour to save the passengers and crew. The Lieutenant took the woman's two eldest children in the boat with him. The rest of the passengers and a few of the crew were with the Captain. During the first night the boats lost sight of each other, and on the third morning, a country vessel passing, took on board the Captain, and those who were in the boat with him, and arrived safe at Bombay, The other boat was never heard of afterwards, and, without doubt, must have gone to the bottom. Mrs. F—— having come to the barracks where her husband was, burst into tears, saying, she had not been to blame for what occurred, but was entirely owing to the fellow's mixing some deleterious ingredients in a glass of brandy she had drunk, which caused her to fall asleep, and in which state she had remained until found by her husband, as before mentioned. F—— being of an easy disposition forgave her, expecting that, at least for the future, she would behave herself; but he was mistaken. She was and continued to be a drunkard, and a notorious shrew, and, to all appearance, likely to get worse instead of better. She died six months after joining her husband at Sourabaya, and he himself a few months after her.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

IN my last, I gave you an account of a wife who was a disgrace to her sex; but, that you may not suppose that all our women were equally bad, I will now give you an anecdote of one who was universally reckoned an excellent wife. Her husband was a corporal in the Regt. to which I belonged, and they were remarkably attached to each other, as well as to their family, which consisted of three boys, the eldest about ten years of age. Two blackguards, envious of a happiness they were incapable of appreciating, were determined to destroy it. Having procured a quantity of laudanum, they mixed it with some arrack, and proceeded to the place where the family resided, and with professions of friendship, gave a glass of the mixture to both the husband and the wife. The husband drank off his glass; but the wife put hers aside, saying, she would take it before going to bed. She, however, did not do so, being very much averse to drink of all kinds. After they had given the drink, they went off and remained outside the barrack until midnight, when they returned to the apartments of their victims, fully expecting that the dose they had administered would

have taken due effect. They found the parties fast asleep, when they attempted to take some indecent liberties with the female, which immediately awoke her up. She called to her husband for assistance, but he was so much overcome with the mixture that had been administered to him, that she could not awake him. She, however, continued to call for assistance, and fortunately was enabled to be heard by a person who slept within a short distance of her, who came to her assistance. One of the fellows was seized and carried to the guard house; but the other contrived to make his escape, and could not be identified, although a strong suspicion rested upon a certain individual. The doctor was called to the husband, and with some difficulty he was aroused from the lethargy he had been thrown into. The glass of the mixture which had been given to the woman, but which she had not drunk, was examined by the doctor, who declared that a very little more of the laudanum would have been sufficient to have killed them. The fellow who had been caught was tried by a Court Martial, and sentenced to receive nine hundred lashes, a punishment which was duly inflicted without any one bestowing upon him the smallest degree of pity, he having acted such a villanous part towards an individual who was so much respected amongst the men generally. The villain who escaped although he could not be properly identified, was pretty well known. It would naturally be supposed, that the punishment of his partner in iniquity, would have

operated as a check upon him, and have induced him to abstain from further deviations from rectitude; but this was not the case, as will be seen in the sequel.

About a fortnight after the occurrence above related, Mrs. W. had occasion to put out some clothes to bleach upon the rock on which the barracks stood. Having finished her task, she remained for a few minutes, gazing at the sea which was dashing against the foot of the rock. She then turned towards the barracks, with the intention of returning to her apartment, when she was confronted by the villain who was suspected of being an accomplice in the last attempt upon her. He attempted some incivilities towards her which she resisted, at the same time ordering him to leave her. This he would not do, and said, that although it should cost him his life he would proceed. He then endeavoured to throw her down; she resisted to the utmost of her power, and cried for assistance. Finding he could not prevail, he took a knife from his pocket, and having unclasped it, threatened, that if she did not comply with his desires he would stab her, and throw her body over the rock; but she cried out still more loudly. Her cries at last attracted the attention of the Serjeant-Major, who hurried towards the spot, but before he reached it, the villain had inflicted three mortal wounds upon the body with his knife. Seeing no chance of escape, he threw himself over the rock into the sea, still retaining the knife in his hand. The Serjeant-Major descended the rock by

a winding path, and when he had reached the foot, seeing the fellow struggling in the water, he dashed in after him and brought him to land. He then wrenched the knife from his hand, and compelled him to re-ascend the rock. A short time before the Serjeant-Major returned from the pursuit of the culprit, I had occasion to pass the place where the poor woman lay weltering in her blood, and groaning most piteously. She had just time to tell me how she had come to be in that sate, and who had done it, when the Serjeant-Major made his appearance with his prisoner, and he ordered me to proceed instantly to the barracks to acquaint her husband with what had happened, and to procure assistance. I went directly and procured a palanquin and bearers, into which the woman was put and carried to the hospital, where the doctor examined the wounds, two of which he pronounced to be mortal, one being in the abdomen. A Court of Enquiry was summoned by our Commanding Officer; when the woman's affidavit was taken, as well as that of the Serjeant-Major, myself and others. That same evening the woman died. The murderer was strictly confined, and a sentry placed at his door; yet, notwithstanding every precaution, he contrived to get a rusty nail with which he attempted to cut his throat; but the sentry observing what he was about, called for assistance, and thus prevented him from accomplishing his purpose. He was afterwards handcuffed. When he was asked his reason for committing such a

bloody deed, he would sometimes answer, that it was not from hatred to the woman; and as for his own life he was quite indifferent how soon he lost it. At other times he would say, that they could not hang him, as no one saw him commit the deed. He remained in confinement with the Regiment for the space of six months; at the expiration of which period, the Regiment being ordered upon actual service, he was sent to Bombay, where he remained in confinement for twelve months. He was then tried by the civil authorities, condemned, and subsequently executed. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXIII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAD always been in the practice of bathing when I had opportunity, and found it extremely beneficial to health especially in warm climates. It was, however, a practice attended with considerable danger in the Island of Java, as will appear from what follows:—One day when I had gone to bathe, and while in the act of taking off my jacket, I perceived a young alligator coming towards me, open mouthed. Finding no means of avoiding the animal, I had to defend myself in the best manner I could from its

attack. I, therefore, took up a stone, the only weapon of defence within my reach, and threw it at the monster with all the force I could. It struck the brute in the mouth, and to my great relief caused it to retreat to the water from whence it had issued. Had I been in the water before I perceived the alligator, my chance of escape would have been small indeed. I never bathed again while I remained in the Island of Java. A few days subsequently, two of our men who had gone into bathe were destroyed by alligators. The fate of these men was much deplored. Had they fallen in the field of battle, they would not have been so much regretted, as it is honorable to die fighting the battles of our fatherland; but to be mangled by a set of amphibious monsters, was a fate too horrible not to be deeply regretted by their surviving comrades.

About this time our Regiment received an increase of two hundred and fifty men, being a draft from the second Battalion, which was stationed at home.

As I have previously mentioned, an order was issued by the Commander-in-Chief for the inspection of all the wounded men, in order that such as were incapable of further service might be invalided and sent home. The time for the inspection of the wounded of our Regiment having arrived, I, of course, went along with the others; but I had no sooner entered, than our Commanding Officer ordered me away, saying that he had something else in view for me, - and that I must not think of going back to

Europe for sometime. I remonstrated with him saying that I was unable to handle my rifle, but that at any rate, as I had been wounded, I had a right to be inspected. He again desired me to go away, and said that I should know more in the afternoon. I obeyed his orders and went away; but I was much displeased and disappointed at not being allowed to be inspected. I was, however, determined not to submit without another attempt, and I resolved to apply to General Gillespie. In my way to the General's house, I met one of our officers who had always shown me the greatest kindness. I informed him how I had been used by the Commanding Officer, and also my intention of applying to General Gillespie. He told me that I had too much of the spirit of independence about me for a soldier, and advised me to be a little more submissive and it would be better for me—that Col. Fraser had really a respect for me, and was determined to replace me in my former rank as serjeant. I told the gentleman that I was then on my way to the General's quarters, and that I would see him ere half an hour had elapsed. Upon this we parted, and I went direct to the General's house. Having arrived at General Gillespie's and enquired for him, I was ordered in, and he enquired what I wanted with him. I told him that Colonel Fraser would not permit me to be inspected along with the other wounded men, and that in consequence, I had come to him for an order to the inspecting officers. He then asked me fo

what reason Col. Fraser refused to allow me to be inspected. I said I believed it to be because he did not wish to part with me. The Gen. said he thought that the Col. wished to befriend me, and that I ought, for my own sake, to obey him. I answered that I had reasons for wishing to leave the Regt., (which reasons I communicated to the Gen.) and I would be obliged by his giving me the order I requested. Gen. Gillespie thereupon wrote the order, and I immediately took my departure, thanking him for his kindness. I now went to the Colonel's quarters, and having found him alone, I presented the General's order. He had no sooner perused it, than he fell into a most violent passion, bestowing upon me every opprobrious epithet he could possibly think of, and asking me how I had had the audacity of applying to General Gillespie on the subject. I told him that as he had refused to allow me to be inspected, I had no other resource but to apply to the General—that all I required was justice and what every soldier in my situation was entitled to. The Col. then said he had every inclination to send me to the guard house to cool me a little. I thanked him for his intention, but said I thought I had had enough of the guard house from Lieut. M'Kenzie, which had been the means of rendering my wounds so bad. "Have you not forgot that yet?" said the Col. "it was all a mistake and you must think no more of it. You are now fighting against your own interest; for it is my intention to befriend you, if you remain with

the Regiment, but if you persist in your desire to leave it, you shall go home with the pension of a private." "You can do in that as you please," I replied, "but one thing assuredly you cannot do, and that is to send me home with the character of a coward." With that expression I left him and I never afterwards spoke to him. The day for the inspection at last arrived, when I attended, and on my name being called I presented myself and underwent an examination, and was declared unfit for further service, and invalided accordingly.

About this time a hunting match was proposed by a party of the officers; and for that purpose they proceeded to a place about fifty miles distant from the barracks. For the first two or three days they had excellent sport, but upon the fourth day a circumstance occurred which ultimate'y proved fatal to two of them. Upon the morning of that day one of the officers was astonished to perceive a number of armed men surrounding the place at which they were then residing, and which belonged to a Chinese magistrate. He immediately called the other three of the party, and having informed them of what he had seen, they armed themselves and went out. Col. F. who was one of the party, asked the person who appeared to be the chief of the banditti the reason of their hostile appearance in that place. He was informed in answer that they had come to avenge the death of some of their comrades who had been put to death by order of the Chinese authorities, at the same time,

however, he told the Colonel that he, as well as the other British officers were at liberty to depart unmolested. The Colonel then told him that before deciding, he wished to consult the other officers, and for that reason he begged of him to delay his attack until the evening. To this the chief seemed to agree, and immediately two of the officers were dispatched by the Colonel to the Major desiring him to send the Rifle and Light Companies to his assistance. The officers got into a canoe, and in five hours, the stream being very rapid they reached head quarters and made known to the Major the critical situation in which they had left Colonel Fraser and Captain M^cPherson. The Major ordered the two companies above named instantly to take horse and proceed to the rescue of their commanding officer and Captain M^cPherson. They made all the dispatch possible, but ere they arrived, the two brave officers, to whose rescue they had come, had fallen victims to the fury of the banditti. It appeared from what was afterwards learned, that the banditti had broken the truce, and soon after the departure of the officers for head quarters, commenced an attack upon the house. Colonel Fraser and Captain M^cPherson continued to fire upon them, from the window, with their fowling pieces until all their amunition was exhausted. They then sallied forth, sword in hand and fought with desperation, until they fell, overpowered by numbers and covered with wounds. The robbers then burst into the house, murdering all that came in their way,

and ransacking the house and taking away every thing of value. Not a soul belonging to the house escaped, with the exception of the eldest son of the proprietor. The banditti had not left the scene of action, when the soldiers arrived to the rescue; and, immediately upon hearing what had happened, surrounded the village, commenced a destructive fire upon the robbers and succeeded in destroying about two hundred of them. One hundred fell alive into the hands of the soldiers, and were afterwards executed without benefit of clergy. Not one of the soldiers was hurt in this affair. Colonel Fraser, who thus fell by the hands of a murderous banditti, was a brave and veteran soldier. He had entered the army when very young and had risen to the rank which he then held, solely by his own merit. His only fault was the possession of a most fiery and impetuous temper which led him into many quarrels, and, as a consequence, the fighting of many duels. He served under the Duke of Wellington in India, and was present at the battle of Assaye when the enemy numbered six to one of the British. Capt. M'Pherson was likewise a brave and meritorious officer. He commenced his military career in the second battalion of the 78th Regt. and had seen a good deal of service. His mother was a widow, and had previously lost three sons in the service of their country. These two officers were greatly lamented by the Regt., especially from the manner in which they met their death. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXIV.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

ORDERS were now issued by the Commander-in-Chief for the invalids to hold themselves in readiness to proceed to Batavia. The mode of the distribution of the prize money was also there stated, with the amount of the share accruing to each rank. That of a private was stated at £25; but ultimately it was reduced to little more than one half.

Having bid farewell to our friends in the Regiment, we embarked at Sourabaya, in an old crazy brig, more fit to be cut up into firewood than to convey human beings a distance of about two hundred miles. It however, pleased Providence to favour us with a fair wind, and after a passage of eight days, we cast anchor at Batavia, with the loss of two men, who died upon the passage, and whose bodies were of course committed to the deep. We were all landed without any accident, and without entering the town of Batavia, we were marched directly to our old cantonments. Next day I, along with a comrade, sallied forth upon a cruise towards Batavia. As we approached the city, we saw a woman coming towards us who had a wooden leg. My comrade hailed her,

asking in what battle she had lost her leg. As we took her for a Dutchwoman, we were not a little surprised to hear her answer us in our own language, that she had received her wound from an English Rifleman at the storming of Cornelius, and that perhaps it might have been one of us who had done it. I asked her from what part of the old country she came. Her reply was, "I am a Scotchwoman, born at Inverness, and my name is M·Donald, and I rather think you are from Scotland also." We assured her that we were, and that we had both been born within thirty miles of her native place. "Come along then with me to my house, and you will be well entertained, and I shall make you acquainted with my story, which is rather a singular one." We accordingly followed her, and in less than a quarter of an hour we got admittance into a house well furnished in the Dutch style, and she introduced us to a man who she said was her husband. He welcomed us in a friendly way, speaking to us in English, in a style fully as good as our own. He told us that he had been a boatswain's mate on board an English frigate for a number of years, and had afterwards been chief mate on board an East India merchant vessel. Having sat for some little time, the woman commenced her story, which was to the following effect:—

"I was married to a soldier in the 78th Regiment, at the time stationed at Fort George, near Inverness. The recruits had scarcely learnt their exercise when the Regiment was ordered to embark for England, to

join the expedition for Holland, under the command of the Duke of York. The troops forming the expedition having embarked, were landed at Ostend, and then marched up the country. The French troops coming in sight, a battle ensued, and the enemy were driven back, but not without a severe loss on the part of the British. Our army then advanced to a place called Numingin, which was stormed and taken. I had the misfortune to lose my husband at the assault of this place. The French army was now in such force, that the British were unable to maintain their position, and were accordingly under the necessity of retreating. As I was at this time taken unwell and delivered of a son, I was unable to accompany the army in its retreat, I was therefore left behind in the hospital along with a number of wounded soldiers, dependant upon the mercy of the French soldiery. We had no reason to complain of their conduct towards us, as they behaved extremely well. Having recovered my health and strength, I took frequent walks about the town. On one of these occasions I chanced to meet a countryman who had left Scotland and settled in this place some years before. From his conversation I understood that he was a smuggler. He took me to his house and introduced me to his wife, a Dutchwoman, by whom he had two children. They used me very kindly, and would on no account hear of my returning to the hospital, unless I promised to return and take up my abode with them, until I had an oppor-

tunity of returning to my own country. I very willingly accepted their kind invitation, and having gone back to the hospital and got what articles belonged to me, I returned to their house in the evening. I had not been with them above a month when I was asked in marriage by a brother of my landlady who was a quarter-master serjeant in a Dutch troop, which had been compelled to join the French army. I was for sometime unwilling to marry him; but at length I yielded to the importunities of my lover, and of his brother-in-law, my countryman, and we were lawfully married. Immediately thereafter, an order came for the Regiment my husband belonged to, to embark for the Isle of France. We took shipping at Ostend. There were six transports and two sloops of war. We were very near being captured by the English; but a severe storm arising, was the means, I believe, of saving us, and we arrived at our destination, after a passage of three months and some days. Upon the passage we lost four men and one woman. My child was unwell the whole time we were at sea, and died shortly after we landed at the Isle of France. My husband was very kind and attentive to me. He was much esteemed by his officers as well as by his comrades. After remaining there about twelve months, three French Regiments arrived from Europe on their way to Java, and the Regiment my husband belonged to was ordered to accompany them. After a tedious voyage we were landed in safety on the Island of Java.

General Deandles was then Commander-in-Chief at that station and remained so for three years thereafter. A British Squadron blockaded the Island during that period. The strong works at Cornelius were erected under his superintendence. Having completed the works, he prepared to embark for Europe, having along with him two frigates loaded with money and other valuables. He was succeeded in the command by General Jansin, a Dutch officer, who was in no respect equal to his predecessor. Nothing occurred to us until after the arrival of the British, when I lost my husband, who was killed at the storming of Cornelius. As soon as I heard of his fall I went in search of his body, when I received a shot from some one of your Riflemen, which caused the loss of my leg without the consolation of receiving a pension; but as I had no business to go into the midst of the strife, I may be thankful that I got off with my life, instead of only losing a leg; however, you see, notwithstanding my wooden leg, I have got another husband." The husband laughed, and said he never thought he would have married a woman with a wooden leg. "Very true," said the wife, "but my long purse blinded you so that you could not see my leg." The husband then said that he was obliged to go to Van Raheer, which would detain him a couple of hours, and desired his wife to detain her countrymen until his return. After his departure, she informed us that her present husband was captain and part owner of a vessel which traded between

Batavia and the Japan Islands, and that it was with part of her money that he had purchased his share of the ship. At the time mentioned by him her husband returned. He informed us that there was a large vessel in sight, bearing down towards the harbour. I observed that it was most probably the one which was expected to convey us to Europe. We remained all that night at the Captain's house, and breakfasted with him next morning. When we took our leave, he made us promise to visit him every day while we remained on the Island. We then returned to our barracks, when we were informed that the vessel which was to convey us home had arrived. It was the same which had been seen the previous evening by our Dutch friend. The following day we again called upon him, who received us kindly; and, after we had seated ourselves, I begged of him to give me some information respecting the Japan Islands. He said he could not give me much information about them, but such as he had in his power he would most cheerfully give me. The following is the substance of what he told me: The Japanese trade with the Dutch only, as they do not consider them to be Christians. But even they are not permitted to go up the country. When a vessel arrives at the trading port, some of the authorities come on board, and the first thing they do, is, with red chalk, to make the sign of the cross upon the deck and each officer and sailor on board is obliged to spit upon it. When this

ceremony is gone through, inquiry is made what articles are wanted, and what are to be given in exchange. This being answered, the crew are ordered ashore and put under a strong guard. Then the anchors, sails, &c. are taken and put into a store. The ship's cargo is next examined, valued, and taken away. The articles wanted are then put on board, and as soon as the cargo is completed the anchors, sails, &c. belonging to the vessel are returned to it, and fresh provisions, water and fuel put on board. The crew are then ordered on board, and every thing being in readiness, the ship is ordered to proceed immediately on her voyage. The supercargo, who is the only one of the crew who has the least semblance of liberty while in the place, is so strictly watched that he has little or no opportunity to make any observations, from the extreme jealousy displayed by these people towards strangers.

After our Dutch friend had given me the information, of which I have given the substance above, I complimented him upon the correctness with which he spoke the English language. He said he had acquired all his knowledge of it, while he served on board a British vessel as boatswain's mate. That he was a native of Holland, born at Flushing, but which place he had not seen for fifteen years. I then turned to my countrywoman, and asked her if she had no wish to see Scotland once more. She answered that she had not; being perfectly contented with her present condition, and that she was sure, that neither her

father nor her mother, if alive, were at that time in Scotland, as they had determined to emigrate to America at the time she was married to her first husband. Having dined with our good friends, we took our leave, promising to see them again next day.
 Yours, &c. THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXV.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE kindness shown to my comrade and myself by our countrywoman, in the Island of Java, was more like the attentions of a sister than that of one who had no other tie to us than being born in the same country. It is, however, a striking characteristic of the natives of Scotland, to assist and befriend each other wherever they meet in a foreign land.

According to promise we went next day to visit our friends, and we found them waiting for us, dressed out in all their finery. After the first salutation was over, the Captain said to us that we must go along with them to a friend's house. To this we made no objection, and four palanquins having been got ready, with Malays to carry them, the Captain gave the order to sail, as he termed it, and away we went, and in the course of half an hour we arrived

at our place of destination. The friend of Captain ——— to whose house he conducted us, was a part owner of the vessel which he commanded. The family consisted of the master of the house, his wife and two children, with a sister-in-law, whose husband, a Captain of Artillery, had been killed at the battle of the tenth of August. The sister-in-law, although she had so lately lost her husband, had already thrown aside her widow's garments. Dinner being served up, the widow assisted me to whatever I required, seeing I was unable to help myself, my arm being still of little or no use and hanging in a sling. Having finished our dinner, and partaken of a glass of punch each, another was proposed, but was declined by my comrade and myself, as our wounds were yet in an unhealed state. Our entertainer remarked, that it was very singular how England, such a small spot on the surface of the globe, was enabled, not only to withstand the power of France, backed as it was by the whole of Europe, but also to overcome it at all points, and, with little more than half the number of troops which their opponents could bring into the field. The Captain here observed, that they had not only withstood the whole power of Europe but of America likewise; Britain being at that time at war with the United States. The resources of Britain seem to be inexhaustable; her navy rides triumphantly in every part of the world; and although they can bring forward a comparatively small number of soldiers, yet

what wonders has she not performed through the medium of her armies. We have lately had an instance in this very island, where they have conquered an enemy more than twice their number, and supported with batteries and entrenchments; but it was no more than I expected, when I saw the soldier-like appearance of the men composing their little army. His friend said that the Dutch Regiments had behaved like cowards, and had thrown away their arms. They acted right said the Captain, the French had no right to rob Holland and tyrannise over Java. The Dutch will be better off under the power of England, at the same time taking up his glass and saying, "Fortune to England." The other pledged him, and added, soon may we hear that England has driven every Frenchman out of Holland and replaced the Stadtholder. At this instant one of the children entered, and said something in Dutch, which made all who understood what was said start to their feet and go to the door. My comrade and I followed, wondering what could be the matter. When we got to the door we beheld a scene sufficiently ludicrous. A party of liberty-men belonging to the *Illustrious*, 74, and to the *Fox* frigate, who had been a few miles into the interior of the Island, upon a frolic, and were returning, mounted upon horseback. They seemed to have foraged well, as they were literally laden with poultry, some hanging upon the necks, some tied to the tails, and others attached to the bodies of the horses. Some of the sailors were seated with

their heads towards the horses tails, that they might converse more conveniently with their comrades in the rear. The horses, unaccustomed to such singular riders and baggage, were extremely restive, and the consequence was, that many of the riders were thrown overboard, as they termed it, more than once in their progress. A number of them, instead of taking a straight course, tacked from side to side, as they said it was impossible for them to sail right in the wind's eye. Altogether, it was a scene such as was never before seen in Batavia, and I am sure that those who witnessed it would not soon forget it. However, onwards they went, until they reached the water's edge, when the boatswain gave the order to belay, when they all came to an anchor. You may be sure my countrywoman did not escape them, and many a joke was cracked at the expense of her wooden leg. This she did not much relish, and requested that we would leave the place and return to the house, which we accordingly did. We remained about two hours longer with the Captain and his wife, and then bade them good evening, and returned to our barracks.

Some of our fellow soldiers, who knew how we were treated by our countrywoman, feeling envious of our good luck, told the officer in charge that my comrade and I had secret dealings with the Dutch authorities, for that every day we were seen going into a gentleman's house. The following day I was taken to task by the officer about the affair, when I

explained the whole matter to him, telling him that we had met with a countrywoman who was married to a Dutchman, Captain of a vessel trading between Batavia and the Japan Islands, and who had treated us in the kindest manner, and insisted upon our spending a part of each day with them. He then enquired the Captain's name, in what part of the city he resided, and if I would show him the place the next day. Having given him the required information, he desired me to be ready to accompany him to the house at nine o'clock the ensuing morning, I then left him. Next morning having cleaned and dressed myself, I called upon the officer at the hour appointed. We then went down towards the city, he in a palanquin, and I on foot. Having arrived at the house, I knocked at the door, which was opened by my countrywoman. As soon as I saw her, I told her that an officer, a native of Inverness, had come along with me to see her. As soon as I had mentioned this, the officer came down from his palanquin, walked forward and shook hands with her. He was received in the kindest manner by both husband and wife, and requested to walk into their house. I excused myself from going in, saying, that I meant to walk a little farther and call upon the family whom we had visited the previous evening, but that I would return in the course of an hour. Having left them together I proceeded to make my call, where I remained a short time, and afterwards took a stroll through the

town. At length feeling fatigued with my ramble and the excessive heat of the sun, I retraced my steps to my countrywoman's house, where I found my Officer and the Captain quite comfortable over a bottle of real Hollands. The Captain desired me to sit down and join them; but I declined, stating, that it was not customary for a private soldier to sit at the same table with a Commissioned Officer. My Officer, who was not over punctilious, desired me to wave my objection and sit down. I then sat down but did not partake of the drink, as I was complaining of headache. I, however, remained to dinner, and about five in the evening we returned to our barracks. On our way back I asked the Officer if he thought there were any grounds for the imputations that had been thrown out against me. He answered that there was "none whatever, and I see that they were influenced solely by envy. My advice to you is, not to allow any of them to know where you go. You and your comrade C—— may go and remain where we have been to-day until the vessel sails. The family seem very partial to you, and I assure you I gave you a very good character, which seemed to please our countrywoman much. But by the bye," he continued, "the Dutchman informs me that you are very inquisitive, and are constantly asking him questions about the different countries he has visited. What is your reason for this?" I answered, "in order that on my return home, in the event of any of my acquaintances making enquiries as to the countries

of the east, I may be enabled to give them some satisfaction, and not appear altogether an ignoramus." He then asked me if I trusted entirely to my memory, or if I took notes. I told him, that although I had an excellent memory, yet I did not entirely trust to it, for I took notes of every thing that I considered worthy of preservation. Being now arrived at the barracks we separated. As soon as I entered the barrack room, I was immediately assailed by some of those envious fellows who had previously been accusing me to the officer, who commenced by saying, here comes the Dutchman. They then abused me for preferring the company of the Dutch to theirs, saying that I knew well that they were a treacherous set, and asking me if I had forgot that the whole Rifle Companies had been nearly blown up by them the first night they were in Batavia. I told them that so long as I found myself well treated, I would continue to associate with them, and that the circumstance alluded to by them was only known to a few of the inhabitants, and had been attempted solely at the instigation of the French Commander. Our Officer will be with you to-morrow, and then you will be enabled to ascertain from him whether or not your suspicions are just. This seemed to satisfy them, and so we parted for the evening. Next day, the Officer who had accompanied me to Captain ——'s house, came to the barracks, and taking me aside, told me, that all the invalids were to embark in a few days on board the Java, Indiaman, at the

same time he said to me, that I ought that day, go down to Batavia, and take leave of my countrywoman and her husband, as perhaps I might not have another opportunity. I asked him if my comrade might go with me. "Certainly," was his reply, "but do not let any of the men know where you are going." Accordingly, my comrade and I started directly for Batavia, to take farewell of our friends. In crossing one of the streets we met the Captain, when we told him that we were on our way to his house, to take our leave of him and his family, as we understood we were to sail in a few days. He turned and accompanied us to his house. When we reached it, he told his wife that her countrymen were come to take leave of her, but that, for his part, he would see us on board our vessel. They insisted upon our spending the night with them, to which we consented, and we remained until after breakfast the next morning. Previous to our taking leave, our countrywoman presented each of us with two dozen silk handkerchiefs. Having bid her farewell, we parted; but not without sorrow on both sides. Having returned to our barracks, we were assailed by those few of our fellow soldiers who envied us, in the usual style. They at the same time said to us, that our enjoyments would soon have an end, and that we would be obliged to fare as they did. We took no notice of their attacks, treating them with silent contempt.

In the evening my comrade and I went to the bazaar, and purchased about six hundred betle nuts of the largest size. These nuts grow upon large trees, in branches at the top. The natives use them by chewing them along with a stuff called Chinam, a kind of powder somewhat resembling fine lime. Previous to my leaving home, I had been informed that if I could bring any of them with me to England, I would get a guinea an ounce for them, from the silk-dyers; and this was the reason of our purchasing a stock of them. Whether our speculation proved fortunate or not will appear hereafter.

That same evening there was another inspection of the invalids, and a few of our party were returned fit for service; amongst these was one who pretended to have in a great measure lost his sight, and gave a great deal of abuse to the inspecting surgeon. He was immediately put into confinement, and afterwards tried by a Court Martial, and sentenced to receive two hundred and fifty lashes, every one of which he received, and was then sent back to his Regiment.

The day subsequent to the punishment of the man above spoken of, we were busily occupied in packing up and preparing for our departure, and in the evening we were marched to Batavia, and embarked in country boats where we remained all night, and in the morning were put on board the vessel which was to convey us from the Island. Having got all safe on board, hammocks and cotton mattrasses, with a palimpoo or covering of Indian print were served

out to us. The vessel we embarked in was quite new, having been launched at Bengal shortly after the taking of Java,—from which she derived her name. She measured, as I understood, about eleven with the exception of seamen, there being only ten hundred tons and was complete in every respect, Europeans, with between two and three hundred Lascars who were very indifferent seamen. There were on board as passengers a few French military officers, prisoners of war; two ladies, widows of British officers; and four officers going home on leave of absence. We likewise took over eight Java horses, as a present to his late Majesty George the Fourth, while Prince Regent, one of which, however, died on the voyage. There was also a female buffalo on board, which calved during the voyage, and both were brought safe to land. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXVI.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOU now find me on board ship, for the purpose of once more visiting the shores of my native land. There is no one, I believe, so dead to feeling, who, having been long in foreign climes, does not feel his breast throb at the bare mention of his native home

If there be any such person I do not envy him. This idea is beautifully portrayed, in the following lines from the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, by Sir W. Scott.

“Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
 Who never to himself hath said,
 This is my own, my native land!
 Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd,
 As home his footsteps he hath turn'd,
 From wandering on a foreign strand!
 If such there breathe, go, mark him well;
 For him no Minstrel raptures swell;
 High though his titles, proud his name,
 Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;
 Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
 The wretch, concentr'd all in self,
 Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
 And, doubly dying, shall go down
 To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
 Unwept, unhonour'd, and unsung.”

And I am sure that not one of the poor invalids on board the *Java*, but what felt elated at the idea of once more seeing the home of their youth, although returning to it with their outward man, in, I may say, a state of mutilation, from the effects of war. The remembrance even of our changed state, seemed to have vanished from our minds at the thoughts of home.

Having slung our hammocks we retired to rest. Next morning, at eight o'clock, all the hammocks had to be passed up, and this was done each morning at the same hour during the whole voyage. The day's provisions were then served out, and afterwards

an allowance of grog. We had no reason, during our home passage, to complain of the want of food or drink, as we had every thing in abundance.

The day previous to our sailing, my friend Captain S—— came on board, in one of the country boats, bringing along with him a present for me and my comrade, consisting of an anker of Batavia arrack, two dozen of roasted fowls, and a cann, containing twelve dozen of eggs, boiled quite hard, as they would not otherwise keep for any length of time; he also brought two sacks of green cocoa nuts, which was a most acceptable present. In return for his kindness, and as a token of remembrance, I pressed upon his acceptance a tortoise-shell snuff-box. He then took his leave, wishing us a speedy and prosperous voyage. As we had plenty of liquor served out to us from the ship, I determined, with the leave of my comrade, to tap the anker of arrack, and deal it out, as long as it lasted, amongst our companions, both friends and foes. He objected at first, saying, he would rather throw it overboard than allow certain ones, whom he named, to taste it. At last, however, he complied, and that evening our arrack was finished. It had the effect intended, as it produced harmony amongst us during the whole voyage. The ship having completed her lading, which consisted chiefly of sugar, coffee and Batavia arrack, the anchor was raised and we set sail.

I will now give you as particular an account of the

Island of Java, as I possibly can, and which, I hope, will prove both amusing and instructive.

The Island of Java was very little known to the English previous to its capture. The Dutch, who are a people jealous of all interference with their affairs, possessed the Island for upwards of two hundred and fifty years. From the time the Dutch acquired possession of the Island, they tyrannized over the natives, not allowing them the least semblance of liberty. The Dutch, at one time, accused the Chinese inhabitants of an intention of rebelling against their authority, and of driving them from the Island. Upon the plea of settling their differences, they appointed the Chinese inhabitants to repair to a certain point to meet them, in order that they might attempt an amicable settlement of their differences. Accordingly they repaired thither, to the amount of about thirty thousand souls; but instead of an amicable meeting for the settlement of their differences, which they had been led to expect, they found themselves surrounded by armed men, who instantly attacked and massacred them, if I am to credit the information, which I received from a respectable gentleman, a resident in the Island.

The Island is six hundred miles long, and upwards of one hundred in breadth. There are some fine looking towns upon it, belonging to the Dutch, such as Bantam, Magrim, Sadmarang, Sourabaya, and Batavia, which last is the chief city, and is strongly fortified, surrounded by walls and a moat, and has

several entrances with draw bridges and gates.—The bridges are drawn up, and the gates are locked every night. The citadel stands on the side of the town next the water. It contains a few warehouses, a town hall with some private dwellings, and other necessary buildings. The city is large, and the houses good, and built of stone. The rooms are, in general, large and well aired, being so contrived as to have at all times a free circulation of air, which is very necessary in that hot climate. The streets are not paved with stone, and the reason assigned is, that the rays of the sun would so heat the stones, as to render it impossible for the slaves, (who are always barefooted) to walk in the streets. There is, however, a range of stones running along the sides of the houses, forming a path for the accommodation of Europeans. The inhabitants of Batavia are a mixed multitude, consisting of Malays, Javanese, Portuguese, Tonganese, Chinese, Dutch, &c. The prevailing language is Dutch, although many others are to be heard in every part of the city. The heat is oppressive and disagreeable. The city is very unhealthy, and is justly denominated the grave of Europeans. It stands low, and is surrounded with canals and stagnant pools, the exhalations from which, are extremely prejudicial to health. The interior of the Island is, however, much healthier than the coast. It is almost impossible to stir abroad from ten in the morning until three in the afternoon, owing to the excessive heat. The clothing of the

Europeans, with the exception of the military, is usually composed of white cotton, black satin, or thin Indian silk. The days and nights are equal throughout the whole year. The sun at mid-day is directly over-head, and of course there is no shadow to be seen. There is no twilight, for as soon as the sun sinks beneath the horizon, darkness prevails. This is the most pleasant season, and would be altogether delightful, were it not for the visitations of the mosquito. Frogs are extremely numerous in the stagnant pools, and are very annoying from their continued croaking. The water is unwholesome, and when drunk immediately when taken from the river causes dysentries and frequently the bloody flux. In order to obviate its bad effects, the inhabitants put it into earthen jars, and after it has remained there for some time, they plunge red hot iron bars into them, which does, in a great measure, destroy its noxious qualities. The inhabitants, however, seldom make use of it, except for tea or coffee. The Javanese, or original inhabitants of the Island, are a tall race, with a yellowish complexion. They occupy the interior of the country, and are not under subjection to the Dutch, but are ruled by their own laws. The Emperor or Sultan, resides in a city in the interior of the Island called Dejocarta. They generally profess the religion of Mahomet, but there are many Pagans amongst them. They have many strange and superstitious notions; amongst others, they conceive that there is some affinity between the

human species and alligators, for they believe that whenever a child is born, a young alligator also comes into the world. They, therefore, every morning regularly, throw food into the water, for the use of these supposed connexions. The rainy season commences in December, and continues until March. This is the only time when the air of the country is any thing like comfortably cool, and disease rather less frequent. The Europeans who live in the Island, generally speaking, lead very intemperate lives which is the principal reason of the mortality being greater amongst them than the inhabitants of the Island; and it appears very surprising to me, that when the ruinous effects of intemperance are brought so vividly before their eyes, that there should be any one so destitute of common sense, as to persevere in this dangerous and immoral practice.

The country around Batavia has certainly a rich and beautiful appearance. There is no barrenness or sterility as in every direction you may perceive large plantations of coffee, sugar, pepper, rice, and other valuable productions, which are enclosed, and divided by rows of the choicest fruit trees; whilst here and there, scattered over the face of the country, are numberless handsome country houses, surrounded with delightful gardens; and were it not for the unhealthiness of the place, caused in some degree by the exhalations from the numerous canals and fish ponds, and which could be so easily remedied, it would indeed be an earthly paradise. In

the streets of Batavia, rows of evergreens are planted as a shade from the excessive heat of the sun. Amongst the trees are many small arbours, where the Dutch inhabitants resort, to drink their coffee and smoke their pipes, and remain there for hours together, quite contented and happy. The number of inhabitants, that is, of free citizens, of every denomination, in the city of Batavia, is estimated at one hundred and twenty thousand. The forests of this Island abound in teak trees, which are much used in ship building, and in warm climates is found to answer better than the British oak. The Dutch derive a large revenue from what are called cock farms, that is places where game cocks are reared for the purpose of fighting, which appears to me a most inhuman practice; and instead of being encouraged and made a source of revenue by the authorities, ought to be discontinued by every means in their power; but the Dutch are not very particular as to the means by which they acquire money.

The animals to be found on the Island are chiefly the following: the rhinoceros, tiger, hyena, leopard, buffalo, with sheep and horses in abundance—the last are of a very small breed. There are various kinds of serpents, and the boa constrictor is found there. I cannot say whether there are any singing birds, in the Island or not, never having seen any. Turtle doves are numerous, and the natives seem to be very fond of them, many keeping them in their houses in cages. In the evenings there are to be

seen immense swarms of an animal, resembling a European bat, but six times larger, and are called flying-foxes. There is also a species of small fowl, similar to that denominated in Europe bantam; and while in Java, I was led to understand that it was first introduced into Europe by the Dutch, shortly after they took possession of the Island, and that it took its name from the town of Bantam. Those found in the Island of Java are much smaller and of a more delicate appearance than any I have ever met with in Europe. At Sourabaya I bought a pair, the smallest I ever saw, they were so tame that they would perch upon my knee and feed from my hand, and, if I did not immediately observe them, would give my hand a peck to put me in mind of their presence. Captain Cameron of the rifle company took a great fancy to my fowls from their small size, and upon my leaving the Island, I gave them to that gentleman, although I had intended to take them with me to Scotland.

All the necessaries of life, and indeed many of its luxuries, are to be had in the Island of Java, at a very moderate price. Tobacco is excellent, and very cheap. Sugar can be got at the rate of two pence per pound, and the sear (equal to a pound and a half) of tea, can be got for three shillings, and when taken by the chest at a much lower rate. Coffee exceedingly good and cheap. Fish most abundant and of an excellent quality. Provisions of all sorts cheap and in great abundance.

You may perhaps have heard of the Upas, or poison tree of Java, and of its wonderful effects. For instance, the impossibility of approaching it, with the wind blowing from it, without the most fatal results. That the Dutch employed criminals to extract its poison, and that few of them survived; and many other wonderful stories to the same purpose. All which are entirely fabulous. There is no hurtful smell proceeds from the tree. I have frequently approached it, and indeed have slept under its shade and felt no bad effects. When I mentioned to Captain S—— what I had heard respecting the Upas tree before I left England, he laughed very heartily at the idea, and told me I would be enabled on my return, to give a contradiction to the ridiculous nonsense. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXVII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

As I have previously mentioned to you, we took our departure from the Island of Java, on board the Java, Indiaman, commanded by Captain Dennison, an active and experienced seaman, and a perfect gentleman. We passed through the straits of Malacca with ease, having fortunately got a fair

wind, and proceeded rapidly and pleasantly on our homeward voyage for the space of three weeks, when we were overtaken, about three o'clock in the morning, with a sudden squall, which did considerable damage to our masts and spars. It carried away our fore-top and top-gallant masts; the bow-sprit and jib-boom were broken asunder, and fifteen of the best seamen, and the most active amongst our Lascars washed overboard, and were no more seen, the vessel running at the time ten knots an hour. At the time the squall attacked the ship, most of us invalids were below in our hammocks, but no sooner did we hear the crash of the falling masts and spars, than such of us as were able rushed up to the deck, when a sad spectacle indeed was presented to our eyes. The vessel appeared to us, inexperienced landsmen, to be a complete wreck. The sea was running mountains high, and it rained in torrents. The hull of the vessel had, however, fortunately received no injury, and we had a sufficiency of spare masts and spars. At daylight all hands were ordered up to repair the damage we had received. About ten o'clock, A. M. the Orion, gun brig appeared in sight, and coming alongside, hailed us, and received the proper answers. The Commander of the Orion understanding the loss we had sustained the previous night, offered us both men and spars to replace our loss. Capt. Dennison, however, declined the offer, stating that he was sufficiently supplied with both. We at the same time received information from the

Commander of the gun brig, that war had commenced between Great Britain and the United States of America, and he bade us be on our guard against the American cruisers. We then parted company to proceed to our respective destinations, wishing each other a speedy voyage. The information of war having commenced between Britain and the United States, seemed to give great satisfaction to the French prisoners that were on board. One of them who could speak the English language, said to me, that he expected our first landing would be at some port in the United States; "and then," said he, "our conditions will be reversed—we shall be free and you will be prisoners." "That is yet to be proved," I replied; "at all events we will not yield to them without a struggle. If any of them come in our way they shall smell powder." "And how," answered he, "are these great guns to be managed; the Lascars know nothing of their management, and I suppose none of you soldiers do; besides most of you are unfit to do anything owing to your wounds?" I said, "a few of us understood the great gun exercise, and are still able to work them, with the assistance which we could soon teach the Lascars to give us." With that he left me, and joined his companions, and he never again addressed me on the subject. It took us nearly a week to repair the damage we had sustained during the gale.

As we neared the Cape of Good Hope the indications of an approaching storm became apparent.

Numerous porpoises were seen sporting around our vessel. The sea became agitated and the sky was obscured with threatening thunder clouds. Gradually the sea became more and more agitated—the thunder's roar was heard above the howlings of the wind, while the vivid lightnings flashed around us and the rain came down in torrents—the storm had now descended upon us in all its fury. The vessel rolled fearfully in the agitated waters—at one time appearing as if mounting to the heavens, and the next moment again sinking into an abyss. The indications of the approach of the storm did not pass unheeded by our watchful commander, who instantly set to work to get his ship prepared for its coming, and scarcely was she made snug, when the gale came in earnest. The storm was tremendous, and lasted for two days and two nights, but at last it pleased Him who rides in the storm and directs the whirlwind, to say it is enough—be still! and it was so. A calm having succeeded the storm, enabled us again to put every thing to rights. Thanks to the prudent foresight of our commander, in having everything in trim before the coming of the storm, the vessel suffered nothing of consequence from its effects. The only loss we met with was one of our swine washed overboard, to the great joy of our Lascars, who would have been happy had the whole of them gone the same way. These sailors are of the Hindoo caste, who, as you will recollect I mentioned in my account of that caste, hold swine's flesh in the

greatest abhorrence. This dislike, being of course known to our European sailors, and the invalid soldiers, they took great delight in tormenting the poor Lascars in every way they could devise. One of the soldiers in particular, of the name of Taylor, was extremely mischevius. One of his tricks was, to them, a very cruel one in its consequences. He would take a piece of pork and rub their faces or other parts of their bodies. This rendered them unclean, and upon their return to their own country, they would either have to undergo some severe penance, or to pay a large sum of money in order to regain caste. This person, Taylor, soon after died, and I believe his death was principally in consequence of hard drinking. The Lascars, I assure you, did not grieve for him. One of them asked me if I knew where Saib Taylor was gone to. "Heaven, I hope," replied I. "No, no; Saib," says he, "is gone to Johannum," (which means hell) "for he has been bad man to us in making us lose caste." "Don't tell your Bramins when you return, and you will not lose caste." "Then," says he, "we will be severely punished in the next world."

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXVIII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

HAVING reached the Cape of Good Hope we once more came to an anchor. We remained four days, and took in fresh provisions for the use of the cabin passengers, and then proceeded on our voyage. After ten days sailing we came in view of the Island of St. Helena, since become so famous as the tomb of Napoleon Buonaparte, and we came to an anchor opposite Jamestown, which is the only landing place on the Island. The morning subsequent to our arrival, all the soldiers who were able got leave to go ashore; I embraced the opportunity, and got ready as speedily as possible. Shortly after landing I met with a townsman, who was a corporal of Artillery, and stationed upon the Island. He recognized me the moment he saw me, and we felt very happy at meeting in that distant spot. He spent all the time he could spare from duty in my company, and during that period, I traversed with him the greater part of the Island. St. Helena is a naturally strong position, as it is only accessible at one point; the remainder of the coast being high and rocky. The natural strength of the place is increased by means of artificial fortifications.

The produce of the Island is not sufficient for the

maintenance of its inhabitants for six months in the year. The deficiency is supplied either from the Cape of Good Hope or from England. The Island is much infested with rats, which are very destructive to the produce of the husbandman's labours. Provisions of all kinds are very high in price, and in consequence, good board and lodging cannot be had under four dollars a day. Water is plentiful and good. It is brought from the island in leather pipes to some distance in the sea, which enable the sailors to fill their barrels without the trouble of taking them ashore. We remained at this place for the space of twenty-five days, when we again took up anchor and proceeded on our homeward passage. Eight days after leaving St. Helena, a strange sail hove in sight. She displayed no colours, so that we could not distinguish to what country she belonged, although we suspected her to be an American. She appeared to be dodging us, and would not answer any of our signals. This continued for the space of two days. Our commander, in the meantime, had every thing prepared for repelling any attack that might be made upon us. Small arms were served out to every man on board who was capable of using them, with the exception of our prisoners, and our large guns were loaded and manned. The Captain at last finding all his signals disregarded, and that the strange sail still continued to hover about, ordered one of our large guns to be fired at her. This had the desired effect, for she imme-

diately hoisted American colours, and then bore down upon us, and informed us that peace had been concluded between Britain and America. The privateer appeared to be full of men, and had a number of guns. Perhaps we would not have got so easily off, had the commander of the privateer been aware, that the soldiers who appeared on deck, were mostly disabled, and unfit to render any service in an engagement, as it would have been no difficult task to have taken us. The wind being favorable, we made great progress in our homeward course, and having cleared the Bay of Biscay, we entered the British Channel. As we were entering the Channel, we perceived a vessel bearing down upon us. On nearing, we discovered her to be the *Isis*, British frigate. Her commander hailed us, and enquired if we had lately seen any strange sail, and in what latitude. We told him that we had spoken an American privateer in such a latitude, who had informed us that peace had been proclaimed between the two countries. We received no answer from the frigate, for immediately she crowded all sail, and we soon lost sight of her. I afterwards heard that the American had been captured by the *Isis*, and brought to Britain.

The first land we made, was the Isle of Wight. Early in the morning, a revenue cutter came alongside. All our articles were overhauled, but nothing contraband was found, at least amongst the soldiers' baggage. In the afternoon we were all landed at

the town of Cowes, and marched to Park House barracks. My comrade and I, were lodged along with a party of men belonging to the 49th Regiment, who were waiting there, in order to be sent to join their corps, then on foreign service. The evening previous to the day these men were to embark, we went down to the town to visit an acquaintance of my comrades. We were detained all night, and next morning on our return to the barracks, we were surprised to find our trunks broken open, and a number of our most valuable things carried off. We suspected our fellow lodgers of the 49th, who were regular jail-birds that had escaped punishment by volunteering, and who had by this time embarked. We immediately went to the commanding officer of the depôt, and informed him of our loss, and whom we suspected of taking our property. He sent off a serjeant and party on board the vessel, who made a search, but without effect, as no trace of our property was to be found. My comrade's loss was rather serious, having amongst other things, lost four dozen silk handkerchiefs, some Indian curiosities, and a pocket-book containing cash to the amount of nearly thirty pounds. My loss was trifling, being only two dozen silk handkerchiefs, and four ostrich feathers which I had purchased at the Cape of Good Hope, with some other small articles. I was not possessed of a great deal of money, and what little I had, I kept about my person, so that the thieves got none of it.

We remained upwards of a month in the Isle of Wight, when we received orders to march for London. We took boat for Southampton, and thence proceeded on foot for the metropolis. Those of our number, who were unable to walk, were conveyed in waggons. On the third day of our march, we met one of our Colonels of the name of Gibb, in company with another military gentleman whose name I did not learn, but who had also served in Java. Upon coming up to us, they halted and dismounted. They then welcomed us all back to our native country, at the same time shaking hands with us, and saying to us, that we would shortly receive, from a grateful country, a reward for all the dangers we had encountered in her behalf, and which would help to render the remainder of our days comfortable. They then put into each man's hand, the amount of a day's pay, to enable us to drink the healths of the donors, at the first resting place, in a pot of porter, which none of us neglected to do. Having arrived in London, we were billeted at some of the small taverns in the neighbourhood of the hospital at Chelsea. It is a very bad plan to billet invalid soldiers in such places, as they seldom get out of the owners' clutches, until they are stript of every sixpence of their cash. In fact none of these low taverns should be allowed near the hospital, as the landlords are constantly on the watch, like so many harpies, to pounce upon the veterans, and fleece them of their hard earned pittance.

We remained at Chelsea for about a fortnight, before we were brought before the board for inspection. At last the day for inspecting the men belonging to the 78th arrived, and each was allotted a pension of such amount as was considered adequate, taking into consideration the nature of his wounds and the length of his service. Ninepence per day was my allowance, being at the rate of three-pence per day for each wound; and I had no reason to complain, seeing that some who had suffered the loss of a leg or an arm, received no more.

Having received so much in advance of my pension, I went along with my old comrade, to different silk dyers, in order to dispose of our betle nuts, expecting to realise a little fortune from them. But how great was our disappointment, to find that we could not get them disposed of at any price, as the dyers told us that a substitute had been discovered which answered their purpose better, and at a less expense. Being thus disappointed in the realization of our golden expectations, I took two bags containing each one hundred nuts, and consigned them to the river Thames, reserving the remaining bag to keep me in remembrance, that I was not qualified to make my fortune by smuggling. My comrade and I then proceeded to the tower, to which place we had been ordered after our examination. On our way we dropt into a gin shop, where we partook of some of their poison, which, although it has the effect of driving grief and vexation from the mind for a

time, in the long run, doubles the load. When we came out, not being much acquainted with the localities, and the little knowledge of them which we had previously possessed being somewhat obscured from the effects of our potations, we felt rather at a loss as to which direction we should bend our steps in order to get to the tower; but being unwilling to make any enquiry on the subject, we went on at a venture. As luck would have it, we took the wrong direction; however, onwards we went from one street to another, until we came to a turnstile, which having crossed, we found ourselves in a church yard. Being completely fatigued with our ramble, we lay down, fell fast asleep, and remained in that state till the morning's dawn. We were not a little surprised when we awoke, to find that we had passed the night amidst the mansions of the dead. The remembrance of having entered a church-yard had been completely obliterated from our minds, from the effects of our draughts from the dispenser of gin on the previous evening. Upon enquiry, we were informed that the church-yard in which we had passed the night, was that of Stepney.

When we got back to our quarters in the tower, we commenced preparations for our departure; and having got our things conveyed to the wharf, that same evening we embarked on board the Pilot, Leith smack, and after a pleasant voyage, landed once more upon the shores of our native country. Yours,
&c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXIX.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

As requested by you, I shall now give you sketches of a few singular characters I met with in my service abroad, as also some anecdotes, which, I trust you will find amusing, without their at all trespassing on the boundaries of decency.

Soon after I arrived at the head-quarters of our Regt. in the Island of Goa, a man of the name of Jones joined us. He was of a most unsocial disposition, keeping always by himself, and never entering into conversation with any one, sometimes not even returning an answer when spoken to. This man had formerly belonged to the 77th Regt., and while in that corps, a conspiracy was formed by some of the privates to murder their officers, and then fly in a body to the Mahratta country. Jones, though not one of the party, by some means or other, got information of the plot, and without delay informed the commanding officer of it. Immediate steps were taken by that officer to frustrate the intentions of the conspirators, and the whole of them were secured and put into confinement. Some of them were shot, and others severely flogged. It being known that Jones was the person who gave information of the con-

spiracy to the commanding officer, his situation in the Regiment was any thing but agreeable. He therefore got leave to join any other Regiment he chose, and having chosen the 78th, he joined as above stated. The commanding officer of the 77th also promised to use his influence to procure Jones a commission, as a reward for the service he had performed. Jones, however, never received a commission, and the disappointment of his hopes in this matter, was the reason we all assigned for his morose and unsocial behaviour. On many occasions I attempted to get him into a conversation, but for a length of time without effect; but at last I succeeded, when he told me the real cause of his misanthropic conduct. It thus happened:—Having observed him at the top of the rock on which the Franciscan monastery stood, gazing upon a passing vessel, and seemingly inattentive to aught else near him, I went silently up behind him, and taking him by the shoulders drew him suddenly back, at the same time saying to him, “what would have become of you had I pushed you forward over the rock instead of drawing you back.” “And if you had done so,” he answered, “what would you have afterwards felt, especially when you considered that I had never done you any harm.” “God forbid that I should ever be guilty of such an action; I only spoke in jest, for were you my greatest enemy I would not have done it. No, not for the possession of the whole Island of Goa, would I have such a deed

upon my conscience." "Your last words," replied he, "have struck daggers to my heart, never speak to me in that style again;—you have touched upon the sore that rankles in my heart." "I am sorry," said I, "that I should in any way have hurt your feelings, nothing I have said was with an intention of offending you." "You have no doubt heard," he said, "that I had been the means of preventing a mutiny in the last Regiment I belonged to, and that some of the men who had been engaged in it had been shot, and others severely flogged." "You acted quite right in what you did, in my opinion," I replied. "Perhaps so," said he, "and if it were to do again I believe I would act in the same manner; but still there were some excusable circumstances in the case. The officers of the Regt., generally speaking, were a most tyrannical set of fellows, and it was the cruel usage which the men received which drove them to do as they did. I was not in the secret of the intended conspiracy. I obtained my information from a native girl whom I kept, who was told of it by her sister, who lived with one of the conspirators. Previous to the trial, two of them turned king's evidence, and, by that means, escaped personal punishment, but were sentenced never to return to their native country. All the others suffered death, with the exception of three, who were severely flogged. When I informed our commander of the conspiracy, he told me that if my information proved correct, he would use his interest

to get me a commission, and that he had no doubt he would succeed, and that, in the meantime, I should have leave to go into any other regiment then in India, that I might choose. You are aware that this commission has never been procured for me, and this my fellow soldiers suppose to be the cause of my want of sociability. In this they are mistaken, far different indeed is the cause. If you will solemnly promise me that you will not speak of it to any in the Regt., or whilst you are in India, I will unburthen my mind to you, it will perhaps, in some degree, relieve the oppressiveness of the load which presses upon me." I gave him the required promise, and he thus began his narrative. "I was born in Monmouthshire, in Wales, and bred a carpenter. Upon the expiration of my servitude I repaired to London, where I remained for three years working at my business. At the end of that period I married a young woman, whose occupation was that of a hat-binder, and with her I continued to live for a length of time very happily. One saturday evening after work, I went with some of my fellow workmen to a public house, in order to take some refreshment. In conversation with my friends I happened to say something in praise of my wife. Upon this a man who was in the same box with us, and with whom I had some slight acquaintance, asked me what was my wife's maiden name. I told him it. He then said that she was no more honest than others who kept left handed husbands. This assertion roused all

my passions, and I struck the fellow a blow on the face which caused blood to flow copiously from his nose. He did not return the blow, but said to me that I should pay dearly for it the next time we met. I shortly after took my departure from the house, and returned home. The allegation against my wife's virtue rendered me very uneasy and roused all the jealousy of my nature. And as every occurrence, however trifling, and which otherwise would pass unheeded, becomes to the jealous matter of importance, and adds fuel to the fire which rages in his breast; or, to use the language of the immortal Shakspeare,

“ _____ trifles, light as air,
Are, to the jealous, confirmations strong
As proofs of holy writ.”

So my suspicions were confirmed by observing, on approaching my house, a man in the act of taking his departure from it. On entering the house I questioned my wife as to her knowledge of Ellice, as that was the name of the man who had made the allegation against her. She said she had formerly known him, but had not seen him since she was eleven years of age. I then demanded of her who it was that left the house as I entered. She said that it was her brother Jem, whom I had never seen, and most likely never would. He was a gentleman's servant, and was on the eve of departing, along with his master, for the East Indies, and had come that evening to take leave of her, but had not been enabled to stop any time, as he was so much occupied preparing for his mas-

ter's departure. Jealousy having taken firm hold of my mind, this explanation by no means satisfied me. In fact I felt convinced that her visitor was some secret lover. My passion became so uncontrollable, that I struck her a blow with my foot, which hurt her so severely, that it ultimately occasioned her death. When dying, she forgave me; and at the same time declared solemnly, that what she had previously told me, was strictly true, and that she had always been faithful to me, and begged that I would send for Ellice. I did send for him, and when he came, I questioned him on the subject, in presence of my wife, and he declared that she was not the person he had meant; but that it was another of the same name, and a connexion of the same family, who was notorious for her bad conduct. The mist caused by jealousy being now dispelled, I saw things as they really were, and I have never since ceased to deplore my folly, and to regret my conduct towards my wife, whose murderer I have ever considered myself to be. This, and this alone, is the cause of my strange conduct." Having finished his account of the cause which induced him to avoid society, we descended the bank together, and proceeded to our different quarters.

This man was very correct in the performance of his military duties. He was a very sober man, and I do not think he ever used his allowance of grog, during the time he served with us. About three weeks after I had the conversation with him above

detailed, he disappeared from the Regiment, and no one could tell whither he had gone. Various surmises were afloat, both as to where he had gone, and as to the cause of his departure; but it was not satisfactorily ascertained what had become of him, until four months afterwards, when he once more appeared amongst us in custody of a serjeant and party. The account which the serjeant gave of him is as follows: The second Battalion of the second Regt. of native infantry on their march, halted a few days in the neighbourhood of a Hindoo temple. Some of the Sepoys, in passing the front of the temple, perceived a man lying at the gate with different parts of his body besmeared with cow-dung as is the custom among Hindoo zealots, and on approaching nearer, they recognized him as a soldier of the 78th, in fact it was no other than my friend Jones. They immediately mentioned the circumstance to an officer, also a Sepoy, who went to the spot and spoke to him, asking him his reason for deserting, and lying in that place in such a condition. He answered that he was tired of the world, and that he was determined to continue as he was. The officer then left him and went to the commanding officer of his Regiment, who was an Englishman, and informed him of the circumstance, who also went and spoke to Jones. He asked him his reasons for his singular conduct, and received the same answer that had been before given by him. The officer then desired him to get up and prepare for a march to his Regiment, under the

charge of an escort. Upon his arrival at the Regt., he was put into confinement, and remained so for ten days, when he was again set at liberty, and once more entered upon his duties. You will no doubt wonder at his getting off so easily, and I can only account for it from the circumstance of his having rendered such good service in his former regiment. He continued to do his duty in the regiment as usual, and accompanied it to Java; but no sooner had we landed on that island than he again disappeared, and was never again seen or heard of. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXX.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

DURING our stay in the Island of Goa, the mess of which I formed a part, was abominably cheated by a Hindoo who undertook to supply us with milk; for instead of that commodity, he gave us an article composed of the juice of cocoa nut and chinam. Although we all along considered the milk, with which he furnished us, to be very indifferent in its quality, yet, it was some time before we discovered the exact nature of the cheat he put upon us. When we did at last discover it, we determined to play him a trick in return, that

would make him smart for his roguery. Many different modes of punishment were proposed; but at last it was agreed that the management of the affair should be left to me. My plan was to cause him to lose caste through his own act.

The Hindoos are not allowed, by their religion, to eat any thing that has been imbued with life, and should any eat thereof, he loses caste, and must, to regain it, either pay down a handsome sum to his priest, or otherwise undergo a severe penance.— My object, therefore, was to get our Hindoo milk-man to eat something of this sort, and that without using force. For this purpose I procured a piece of cheese in which there were mites, but so minute as to be undiscernable, without the aid of a microscope. On the subsequent morning, I placed it on the table; and on the arrival of the milk-man I took a piece of it myself, at the same time offering some to him which he took and eat up greedily. I then took the remainder, and placing it under a microscope, of which I had obtained a loan for the occasion, shewed the Hindoo the mites moving in it, and thus convinced him that he had eat living animals, and had lost caste. No sooner did he perceive this, than he set up a terrible cry, saying that he was a ruined man; that he had lost caste, and he had no money to redeem himself. There was no one present enjoyed the sport more than our cook, who was himself a Hindoo, and had also lost caste. He seemed quite delighted to have a partner in misfor-

tune. The milkman went immediately and lodged a complaint against me with the commanding officer, who instantly sent for me ; but upon my explaining the reason for doing what I had done to the man, he dismissed me.

At the time the regiment lay at Goa, there was a private belonging to the company of which I was one of the sergeants, of the name of Richard Dove. He was an Englishman, or as he himself used to term it, "a native of merry England." He was an enthusiast in music, and a good performer on the violin. I recollect one night being on guard together, Richard was placed on duty as a sentry, about the middle of the night, and when the corporal went to relieve him, he found him with his fiddle shouldered instead of his musket, playing away right merrily. How he had got his fiddle there, no one could tell, although we suspected that after he had been stationed, he had left his post and gone to his room to procure it. Upon his return to the guard-room, the corporal reported the matter to me as serjeant of the guard and however unwilling, I had no alternative but to put Richard under arrest, and to report it in the morning to the officer of the guard. It was a fortunate thing for the poor fellow, that the officer on duty at that time, was not one of those who delighted in a rigid performance of their duty, but was rather one who was inclined always to take the most favorable view of matters regarding any poor fellow, against whom their was a complaint. In making

my report of Richard's case to the officer, I did the best I could for him, and at the same time, I reminded the officer that when music was in the question he was not famous for acting the most rational part. Richard was, therefore, fortunate enough to get off with an injunction to take better care for the future, and to get into no more such scrapes. From this period, Richard became much attached to me, conceiving that he was in a considerable degree indebted to me for his escape from punishment.

Yours, &c. THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXXI.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

SUBSEQUENT to the event mentioned in the preceeding letter, Richard and I were a good deal together, and I got from him an account of his former life; a few particulars of which, I think, will not prove altogether uninteresting, and, shall, therefore, proceed to narrate them.

He was born in London, and was bred to the business of an upholsterer. Shortly after his time of service expired, an aunt died and left him a property, in Leadenhall street, which he disposed of for £4000. He now gave up business and commenced gentleman, making pleasure his sole object. He fre-

quented all places of public amusement, and engaged in all sorts of debauchery and riot. He spent much of his time, and of course, a good deal of his money, in the company of females, not of the most reputable sort. At the end of the first year he found that one thousand, out of his four thousand pounds, was irretrievably gone. He, therefore, resolved to change his mode of living, and for this purpose he thought it best for him to get married. He paid his addresses to a very pretty girl of his acquaintance, which she accepted, and they were speedily married. It did not, however, answer his expectations, for instead of living more moderately, his money disappeared quicker than ever. They no doubt, he said, spent a merry life, but it was not of long endurance, as the cash was daily becoming less and less; at last it was reduced to the sum of two hundred pounds. One day about this time, his wife went out, telling him that she was going to visit her step-mother, which she was frequently in the habit of doing and also of staying a considerable time; but when the evening set in and at length closed, without her appearing, he became a little astonished. He, however, waited till the morning, and then went to her step-mother's, when he discovered that she had set off to Ireland, in company with an officer, a native of that country. Thus did he get rid of both his money and his wife, at the same time, and in my opinion the former was the only loss.

He heard nothing more of his wife for a consider-

able time; but at length he received a letter from her, stating, that the person who had induced her to forsake him, had gone to join his Regt. in Portugal, and left her in such destitute circumstances, that she had been compelled to sell the best of her clothes in order to pay her lodgings, and procure present sustenance, and that she knew not what to do or where to look for her future support. Immediately on receiving her letter, Richard sold a gold watch, which had cost him £60, for £30:—of this sum, he sent £10 to the miserable woman. In about three weeks after, she returned to London and again joined him, when he perceived that disease had made sad havoc upon her constitution, and, she appeared, in fact, to be in the last stage of a decline. Every thing that could be done for her, by medicine and kind treatment was tried, but in vain, for she died about two months subsequent to her return.

After this event Richard sold all his furniture, left London, and went to Portsmouth, where he took up his residence in the family of a brother who was on board a man-of-war, at that time in the Mediterranean. On his brother's return home, however, he upbraided Richard for his past misconduct, and his present idleness, and told him that he had better look out for employment. He immediately left the house, and entered himself on board a frigate bound for the East Indies. The vessel sailed for Bombay, where she arrived in safety. Some time after her arrival, he got leave to go ashore along

with some others, with strict injunctions to return to the vessel in the evening. However, Richard and one of his cronies indulged so freely in their potations, as to become perfectly oblivious to the order for their return to the vessel that same evening. Next morning, upon their becoming sober, they recollected it, and at the same time became conscious that they would be most likely to receive a round dozen or two for their neglect of orders. They, therefore, resolved to abandon the frigate; and having kept themselves out of the way for a time, they subsequently entered on board a vessel trading between Bombay and Ceylon. As they had left all their things on board the frigate, they procured an advance from the master, to purchase a few necessaries—which having got, they immediately afterwards set sail. They had been but a short time out, when they had the misfortune to be captured by a French frigate, and carried to the Isle of France where they remained until the Island was taken by the British, when they were set at liberty. During their stay on the Island, every inducement was held out to them to join the French service. Richard could not be induced to do so, but his comrade joined the frigate that had captured them. After the taking of the Isle of France by the British, Richard returned once more to Bombay. Having taken a strong dislike to the sea service, he resolved not to return to it but to make trial of a soldier's life, and enlisted in the 78th Regt., which was then stationed at the above place.

During the period that Richard served with us, it had become a very common practice with some of our men to sell their allowance of arrack to those of their comrades who wanted to purchase it. By this means drunkenness became so prevalent that it was necessary that some official steps should be taken to put a stop to a practice of so deleterious a nature. A regimental order was issued, that the arrack in future should be served out diluted with a certain quantity of water, and that each man should drink his allowance in the presence of the non-commissioned officers. Those of the Regt. who had never either sold or bought any allowance of arrack, felt so much hurt at being included in this order, that they remonstrated with their officers, and, in consequence the order was afterwards altered, so as to exclude all those who had not been guilty of this obnoxious act. My friend Richard had been regularly in the habit of selling his allowance, and he felt annoyed at not having it in his power to continue the practice. Accordingly the very first day when his allowance was presented to him, and he was desired to drink it off, he said to the orderly serjeant, "I will see you d——d first," at the same time throwing the grog in his face. For this offence he was condemned to thirty days hard labour, but not half the period had passed, when he was seized with a brain fever, brought on by the excessive heat and severity of the labour he had to perform. He was taken to the

hospital, and every thing done for him, but in three days he breathed his last. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXXII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

ONE of the most amusing fellows in the Regt. was John Palmer. He joined us in India from the depôt, and remained about three years in the Regt. He was a young man of respectable connexions, and had received an education superior to what generally falls to the lot of any found in the ranks. He had served some time as a midshipman, but disliking the service, abandoned it and returned home, which so much displeased his relations, that they turned their backs upon him. In consequence, he again left home, and, without the knowledge of his friends, enlisted in the 78th, and it was not until he had been some time with us, that he informed them of his new occupation, or anything as to his proceedings subsequent to his leaving them. When his friends became acquainted with his situation, he used frequently to receive money from home. After serving three years, he was bought off, and returned to England, when his father purchased him a commission in another Regiment.

Palmer was one of the merriest light-hearted young fellows I ever knew, and many an evening did he keep us in a roar of laughter. His store of anecdote seemed inexhaustable, and his manner of relating them unequalled. At comic songs, especially Irish ones, he had few equals. His powers of ventriloquism were astonishing, and I often yet fancy I see him in the midst of a group of us, teaching an imaginary class of youngsters, in imitation of his dancing master—the instructions and scolding of the master, mixed up with a treatise on etiquette, so comically expressed, that peals of laughter would succeed one another, until both the performer and his audience were alike exhausted. The variations of his voice, from the admonitions of the master, to the squalling and crying of the pupils, was a treat equal to anything to be met with on the stage; after which he would give specimens of ventriloquism, in imitation of dogs, cats, pigs, a carpenter at work with his saw and plane, the *fizzing* of a frying pan, &c. so admirably correct, that one would almost doubt the nature of the deception. His pleasing manners and generous heart made him a favourite with us all, and there was not a woman in the Regt. but would have done anything to serve him. John had a great partiality for the fair sex, and wherever we happened to be quartered, he was sure to pick up a sweetheart. In Java, he had the imprudence to pay his addresses to the wife of a Dutch settler; and Mynheer, having suspected something, one day returned from market at

an unusually early hour and found John in the house. John knew nothing of the Dutchman's lingo, and the other as little of his. The Dutchman stamped like a madman, and swore most furiously, and the Englishman was busy offering polite explanations, when he was saluted by a blow with a cudgel, which felled him to the ground, and rendered him senseless as to what followed. When he recovered, he found himself lying in some brushwood by the road-side, with all his clothes off, and his body covered over with red paint. He accosted several who were passing along the road, with the intention of sending a message to some of his comrades, but they no sooner got a sight of him, than they ran off terror struck.—He remained in the wood till dusk, when he approached near the barracks, and hailed some of the men, who got him smuggled in; when, after a goodly consumption of soap and hot water, “Richard was himself again.”

A serjeant belonging to our Regt. had a small four wheeled carriage, to which he used to harness a pair of fine goats, and drive tandem-fashion along the road. John took it into his head that he would outdo the serjeant, and accordingly set about training four pigs, which, in a short time, he made so tractable, that he appeared in public, to the great amusement of the settlers, who used to turn out and laugh heartily at his freak. One day when he was taking his drive, a settler was making his way past with a cart, and his horse taking fright at this odd turn out, commenced

capering and rearing, when John tried to bring up his pigs; but before he had time to do so, the horse was dancing over the whole affair, and he found himself upset and rolled into a ditch, his vehicle smashed to pieces, and one of his stud with its leg broken. This put John completely out of conceit of driving.

Palmer, along with a few of us, was strolling one evening by the sea side; two boys who were amusing themselves in a small skiff, were caught by a breeze that sprung up, and the bark was carried to a point where the breakers were running high. It had scarcely got amongst them when it upset, which Palmer, who was an expert swimmer, no sooner witnessed, than he stripped off what clothes he could, in the hurry, and plunged in to save them. By the time he reached the breakers, one of the boys had sunk, the other he got hold of, and after great exertion, brought him ashore, both of them much exhausted. The boy's father came to the barracks in search of Palmer, the next day, and after embracing him, and shedding a flood of tears, offered him money to any amount; but John would receive no remuneration. It was like him.

Before leaving us, he gave an entertainment to the company to which he belonged, and a joyous night we had. John, as usual, was all humour and fun, and the dance was kept up till day-break, enlivened by the soul-stirring music of our band. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXXIII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

A PRIVATE joined us while stationed in the Island of Goa from the second Battalion, of the name of Rory Anderson. Rory, although bearing the Saxon patronymic of Anderson, was of true Celtic descent. He was of the clan Gregor; and when upon the proscription of that clan, the remnant of it found it necessary to adopt some other designation, that they might avoid the consequences of that proscription, Rory's progenitors assumed the safer though less romantic name of Anderson. Rory was a very handsome, good-humoured fellow, an ardent lover of the fair sex, and was himself likewise a great favorite with them. One of his amours, however, turned out rather unfortunately for my friend Rory, and was the cause of his leaving home and becoming a soldier. A young Rory made his appearance without the priest having pronounced the nuptial benediction upon the father and mother. For this offence, Rory was decreed by the Kirk Session to be exalted upon the stool of repentance, commonly called the "cutty stool;" but he being a lad of *modesty*, was by no means ambitious of the preferment. The decrees of the session upon cases of that sort are, however,

like the laws of the Medes and Persians, irrevocable, and Rory's only safety, therefore, lay in flight. He accordingly abandoned his highland home, and wended his way to the lowlands. Upon his arrival in Aberdeen, he met with a recruiting serjeant who was his countryman, and with him he adjourned to a tavern to have a social glass. They had not been long together, however, before Rory was induced by the flattering representations of his countryman, to become a soldier, and the next morning he was sworn, and immediately dispatched to join the second Battalion of the 78th, then stationed at Fort George. Shortly after he joined, the Regt. was ordered on foreign service, and the place of their destination was Calabria; when, after a successful campaign, in which my friend saw a good deal of service, but which it is unnecessary to particularize, the Regiment was ordered to Messina, in the Island of Sicily.

In such a place as Messina, you may very readily imagine, that a handsome youth like Rory would be at no loss for opportunities to gratify his amorous propensities. Many a story did he tell me of his adventures in the court of Cupid while he remained in that place; one or two of which I shall give you as a specimen.

One evening, Rory had been indulging himself with some of his comrades, in a wine-house, and when he was returning to his quarters, "no that fou but unco happy," he encountered a damsel, who tak-

ing his fancy, he resolved to make up to her, and, notwithstanding their ignorance of each other's language, they speedily formed an acquaintance, which resulted in Rory's accompanying the frail-fair to her residence, and there spending the night, without his ever for a moment recollecting, that he ought, instead, to have been in his quarters. Next morning, however, the recollection returned, and with it the dread of punishment for his disobedience. Knowing that he had a good friend in the Adjutant, on his return he immediately repaired to that gentleman, and told him exactly how matters stood, who allowed him to escape at that time, with an injunction, never to offend in the same way again, otherwise he would not get off so easily.

Another adventure which Rory had, and from which he did not escape so fortunately was the following. The *cara sposa* of a person of some consequence in the city, having taken a liking to Rory's handsome person, procured a private meeting with him; and this was succeeded by many others, which contributed greatly both to his pleasure and profit, as the lady was exceedingly liberal in her gifts; but unfortunately for their mutual enjoyment, the jealousy of the lady's husband induced him to watch her, and one evening he caught poor Rory, just as he was emerging from the house, and after the Sicilian fashion, complimented him with a blow with his stiletto. The force of the blow completely stunned him, but fortunately the

weapon glanced upon his ribs, thus rendering the wound comparatively trifling. When he recovered from the effects of the blow he found himself lying upon the street, without any one near him. He got up, and made the best of his way to his quarters, and got his wound dressed, which soon healed. He, however, never ventured to pay another visit to the lady during the short remainder of his stay in Sicily.

An order having arrived for the Regiment to join the forces in Egypt, the men were immediately embarked, and after a short voyage landed there. Not long after the landing of the Regiment, an encounter took place with the Turks, in which the 78th suffered severely, and Rory, with many others were made prisoners. The prisoners were all crowded up into a place scarcely fit for the reception of pigs, and there kept in confinement for some length of time. They got very little food, and that of the very worst description. They were at last relieved from their wretched confinement for the purpose of being disposed of to different masters. It was Rory's fortune to become the property of a Bashaw, and at the first was put to labour in his gardens. He had not been very long in that situation before he attracted the notice of the ladies of the Bashaw's harem. It did not require much encouragement, on the part of the females, to induce Rory to endeavour to find means to visit them in their retreat, and he soon contrived to get an entrance into the forbidden apartments, and was much pleased with

the reception he met with. He repeated his visits more than once; but they were not to have a long continuance. On one occasion, while they were in the height of their merriment, they were all thrown into the greatest consternation by an unexpected visit paid by the Bashaw to the harem.—To escape was impossible, nor was there any means of procuring concealment; he had, therefore, no alternative but to await the consequences of his rashness. The astonishment of the Bashaw, when he discovered Rory in the apartments of his women, was beyond description; but no sooner did he recover from his surprise than he ordered him to be seized and the bastinado to be applied. This was by no means agreeable to Rory, who petitioned hard for pardon, and at last the Bashaw agreed to pardon him, upon condition that he would change his religion and become Mussulman. This Rory agreed to, and was accordingly circumcised, had his head shaved, and got himself dressed out in the Turkish costume. He had no longer to labour in the gardens—it was now his duty to wait on the Bashaw and attend him in his excursions. Rory very shortly became a great favorite with his master, who made him a present of a beautiful slave for a wife. Notwithstanding all this kindness, Rory felt far from satisfied in his new situation, and felt a vehement longing for home. He, therefore, determined to effect his escape as soon as possible. Not long after, an opportunity occurred during an excursion in which he accompanied his

master, when passing at no great distance from Alexandria, then in the occupation of the British, he dropt behind the rest of the party, and no sooner were they out of sight, than he put spurs to his horse and crossed the country towards that city, which he soon gained. On approaching the city he was very near getting shot by a sentinel, who mistook him for a Turk; but having made known who and what he was, he was admitted and once more joined his Regiment and resumed his former dress. He sold his horse, but his dress and other accoutrements he kept and took with him to Britain. Peace having been established, his Regt. returned home; but they had not long been there before a draught of the most efficient of the men was ordered to join the first Battalion of the Regt. then in the Island of Goa.— Amongst this number was Rory.

Whether from greater caution in the pursuit of adventure, or whether his love of adventure itself had been cooled I cannot say, but certain it is, that Rory got into no scrapes during the time he and I were fellow soldiers. In the Regt. he was a general favorite, and was esteemed a good-hearted, jovial fellow. He was likewise an excellent and a brave soldier. I left him with the Regiment.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXXIV.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

DURING the war it was a common practice to empty the prisons to make up the numbers required for the army and navy; and pickpockets, thieves, and riotous drunkards were indiscriminately admitted into both services,—a practice which had its baneful effects.

When a criminal was convicted at the bar of the police, he generally had his choice, either to be sent to hard labour, in a house of correction, or enter the service; the latter alternative was too often preferred. The consequences of such an arrangement was soon perceived. The 78th got a few of those gentlemen; and generally speaking, they disgraced us. One fellow of the name of Potter, was, without exception, the most incorrigible blackguard I ever met with, either in the service or out of it. He was flogged several times, and lived as much in the black hole and hospital as in the barracks. He had been tried for theft, disobedience, insolence, drunkenness and riot, times without number.—Still he was the same.

Being a pugilist, and a stout well built man, he considered himself the bully of the Regt., and for a long time he certainly did crow over us; but “every

dog has its day.” A strapping Irishman of the name of O’Neil having been grossly insulted by him, resented it, when a challenge for a boxing match was given to O’Neil, which he accepted. About twenty of us who were in the secret, repaired to the spot at the appointed time, to see fair play; or rather, as we dreaded, to see O’Neil get sadly drubbed, for we never supposed him to be any thing like a match for his opponent. Potter, in his usual insolent manner, commenced blackguarding and saying every thing he could to ruffle the temper of O’Neil, who never opened his mouth in reply, but commenced to *peel*. Potter followed the example, and the seconds and bottle holders having stepped forward, the two combatants set to work—Potter swearing and railing—O’Neil mute as a mummy.

At first O’Neil acted on the defensive, and continued that system until he saw, that with rage and exertion, his antagonist was getting exhausted, when he struck in upon him, and kept following him up with a degree of courage and effect that delighted his own party. Potter, finding that his task was not quite so easy as he supposed, tried what he could do by making a sudden rush upon his antagonist; but O’Neil convinced him that he could take him on that tack also, and kept increasing the amount of punishment. After fighting for upwards of half an hour, Potter was knocked up, and O’Neil declared victor, to the great joy of most present.

On our return to the barracks, one of Potter's party accused O'Neil of cowardice at the outset of the battle, which O'Neil's second repelled, and the two getting first to high words and then to blows, another battle commenced. They caught hold of each other, and falling, continued to roll about, when a few of us ran forward to separate them, and our intentions having been mistaken, we were beset by others. A general battle ensued, which was beginning to assume a rather serious appearance, when the guard was turned out, and the whole of us taken prisoners. What with black eyes, bloody noses and torn clothes, we certainly formed a strange group. Next morning, an investigation was made into the matter, and we received a severe reprimand, and Potter was ordered to the hospital, until his face, which was much disfigured, would resume its natural appearance.

I have no doubt the principals, at least, would not have escaped so easily, but for the circumstance of O'Neil being a favourite with the officers generally, which his brave conduct in the field, in saving the life of a young officer, had justly rendered him; and it would have been impossible to have allowed him to escape if any of the others had been punished.—O'Neil, from his general good behaviour, would have received promotion, had he possessed education to have enabled him to act as a non-commissioned officer.

What I have alluded to respecting O'Neil's bravery, occurred at Cornelius. One of our guns which

greatly annoyed the enemy, causing much slaughter among them, formed an object of attack on their part, with the hope of capturing it; and owing to the dense smoke, the party had advanced to within one hundred feet of it, before they were observed; but they were no sooner discovered, than the order to charge was given. The ground being very uneven, both lines became broken, and in following up the retreating enemy, our left got in amongst them and committed great havoc. In this part of the fray, one of our Ensigns seemed to be marked out by a serjeant of the enemy as a victim, who, at the distance of three yards, fired at him, and having only wounded him slightly, had grasped his musket to run him through, when O'Neil perceiving his intention, at one bound, sprung upon the serjeant, and plunged his bayonet into his body.

Potter, after his encounter with O'Neil, bore himself much more meekly amongst us, and it was evident that his defeat had humbled him; but in every other respect he went on in the old way, and at last died in the hospital, worn out with disease and debauchery.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXXV.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I WILL now detail to you two love affairs which came under my observation, both partaking of the ridiculous, but proving the adage of the poet, that

“Love rules the camp.”

The individual I shall first attempt to describe was a private in our Regt., a fine looking young fellow of the light company, but who had a mighty conceit of his personal appearance, with a strong tinge of romance, which had been greatly fostered by poring over novels of every description that he could get hold of.

Bob ———, which was his name, imagined that every woman that saw him was enraptured with his elegant person; and as his capering gait could not but attract their attention, he was sure to place the curiosity which his appearance created, to the credit of his conquests.

There was a respectable family that lived near our barracks, in which there were three young ladies, and Bob in his rambles generally strolled in that direction, strutting past the house with all the pride and pomp of a peacock; and having managed to attract

their attention, he concluded he had also made an impression upon their hearts.

His conduct having been observed by some of us, a practical joke was played off upon him which afforded much merriment, and might have made Bob exclaim in the words of the Bard, that

“ The course of true love did never yet run smooth.”

A letter was brought to the barracks, addressed to Bob, expressive of the desire the writer had to obtain an interview with him, and appointing the place and time of meeting. Bob's movements were closely watched, and it was with difficulty our laughter could be suppressed, on observing him, every now and then taking a peep into a small looking glass trimming up his bushy whiskers and giving the locks at his temples a twitch, to set their curl more elegantly. Bob seemed quite restless and absorbed.

The hour having at last arrived, off he set in the usual direction, and passed the house on his way to the place appointed for the interview. Shortly after he had taken up his position, he perceived a female moving along the road, in a very slow lady-like pace, who no sooner approached than Bob commenced bowing and scraping like a dancing master, seeming quite delighted at the modest manner in which he was acknowledged; and bringing himself up alongside of her, they walked slowly on conversing with each other, until they approached a place where a party of

us were lying in ambush. The lady, who was aware of our presence, on seeing us squatted among the bushes, burst into a loud laugh, being unable to contain her gravity any longer. Bob being ignorant of the cause of such conduct on her part, took it into his head that her feelings had become so excited, that she had fallen into hysterics; and putting his arm round her waist, to support her, his hand came in contact with something which felt like the buttons of a coat, secreted under the gown; thereby unveiling the plot, which so enraged him, that he was about to inflict summary punishment on the damsel, when we stepped forward to her protection, and Bob made off, vowing vengeance.

The lady, who was a drummer in the 86th, highly amused us with a detail of Bob's polite talk. Poor Bob was sadly annoyed with the affair ever after.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXXVI.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE other love affair which I promised to relate, occurred on board the Java, on our homeward voyage. This victim of Cupid was a strapping Irish gentleman, Captain ——, of the 89th, returning to

Britain on leave, in bad health. He was as handsome a man as you could see, and not less than six feet in height. He received his wound from the eyes of the widow of a Lieut.-Colonel who was also a passenger, and as the lady refused to listen to his addresses, he acted like a madman. She could not appear in his presence without annoyance, and was at last obliged to shut herself up in her little state room. The Captain of the ship remonstrated with him on the impropriety of his conduct, as also several of the passengers; but without effect, as he became daily worse, and threatened to take away his life if the lady would not accept his hand. When the lady was shut up in her cabin, he would walk about the door, entreating her in the most humble whine, "only to listen to one word—och, my dear lady, one word, one word—won't you speak to me lady—won't you speak to me," and in this way he would go on for hours.

On one occasion he became so very outrageous that he had to be bound with ropes to prevent him committing suicide, which had the effect for a few days of cooling him. His love for the lady, however, was no way abated, and finding all his endeavours to gain her in vain, he once more determined to put an end to his existence by blowing his brains out. In his hurry to perpetrate the deed contemplated, he loaded his pistol with the ball downwards and in firing, the powder only flashed in the pan.

The most humorous circumstance which happened

him, was an attempt to throw himself on the mercy of old Neptune, and for this purpose he tried to get through the port hole of his little cabin. His head and one of his arms got outside the vessel, and there he stuck able neither to advance nor retreat. A voice was heard, as if from the mighty deep, bewailing in the most disconsolate tones, its unfortunate situation, when one of the Jacks, looking over the ship's side, discovered the Captain writhing and twisting away to extricate himself. The alarm was given, and an attempt made to draw the badger from behind; but that was impossible, and to pull him forward was equally hopeless, as by far the most bulky part of his person remained inside. A consultation was held, when a carpenter, with his mallet and chisel, was swung over the ship, and after chipping a goodly piece out of the port hole, our love-stricken Captain was released. Still he continued in his old strain, and at last refused to shave or take any food. How long this resolution would have been kept, I know not, as his perseverance, joined with the entreaties of the captain of the ship, gained the day.

The lady consented, which restored him to his usual temperament, and as we soon after arrived at St. Helena, they were married.

On the boat, containing the newly married pair, and the party that accompanied them, putting off from the island, the colours were hoisted and a salute fired, and when they came alongside, the yards

were manned to give them three hearty cheers as a welcome back again, which gratified the Captain so much, that he requested the commander of the ship to allow the sailors and soldiers some amusement; to which he readily complied, and an allowance of grog was served out. All hands set to work, clearing the decks for a dance, and scrubbing off their beards, that they might cut as respectable a figure as possible. The dance and song was kept up with great glee and humour to a late hour. I could not but observe the superiority of the French prisoners in dancing—indeed some of them were elegant in their movements. The real Jack tar style of dance, was also well executed by some of our own sailors.

During the course of the evening, the newly married Captain, along with some of the other passengers and officers of the ship, paid us a visit, when one of our party, who was appointed spokesman, delivered a short address, tendering to him our hearty wishes for the future happiness of himself and lady, and thanking him for his recommendation of us to the Commander. After a short reply on the part of the Captain, they returned under cover of three cheers, and one more, when we again resumed the festivities of the evening.

Among the officers of the ship, there was a midshipman who was on his first voyage, and which he often declared should be his last. He was better known by the cognomen of Booby Jack, than that

which he received at his christening, and was the continual butt of his messmates.

While lying off St. Helena, the midshipmen got leave to go ashore to spend a day on the island, and Booby Jack along with the rest. They all set off, rigged out in their best attire, to have a spree, as they called it, by way of breaking in upon the tedium of a long voyage; but however much the others enjoyed themselves, Jack, I dare say, felt very glad to get on board again.

In order to annoy poor Jack, and to cause some amusement to themselves, they got a woman on the island to claim him as her husband; and having acquainted her with some of the names and circumstances connected with his family, in order to give a colouring of truth to the affair, placed Jack in a sad dilemma. It was in vain for him to explain to his messmates; for however anxious they seemed in his favour, appearances were so much against him, that they could not take his part in the matter. Thus the joke was carried on for several hours, at the expense of poor Booby, and to the great delight of the whole company. As evening was drawing on, and the time for their return to the ship at hand, it was found necessary to put an end, for the present, to the whole affair; one of his companions proposed to the woman that they all would become bail for his appearance next day, if she would allow him to go along with them. To this she readily consented, to the great joy of Jack, who promised to return, and to bring

the Captain with him, who would prove the falsity of the accusation.

After Jack arrived on board, he embraced the first opportunity of informing the Captain of all that had occurred, and requesting his interference. A very little of his story explained to the Captain the nature of the charge which seemed so mysterious to Booby, who told him that now he was on board it would be as well for him to remain there, in case, on his next trip, a plurality of wives should start up, as he had known several good-looking fellows kidnapped in that way. Jack thought he had made a very narrow escape, and I doubt not, would relate it on his return home, as one of the many perils he had encountered since entering the service. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXXVII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOU are probably aware that India is a great mart for British productions; but there is one article which forms a part of Indian commerce, of which perhaps you may be ignorant—that is shipping ladies on a matrimonial speculation; and scarcely a vessel belonging to the East India Company arrives without a few of them. They are no sooner finished

with their education, than they are fitted out for a voyage to one of the seats of Government, and are often married before they are many weeks in the country, to some of our officers or to respectable civilians. They may get wealthier husbands than they could expect at home, but to obtain them they must make great sacrifices, as the climate is by no means a pleasant one. One of our Captains married a lady who came out under these circumstances. She was accompanied by a lady's maid, who had no reason to regret her trip across the ocean, as she far outstripped her mistress both in the rank and wealth of her husband. She was married to a Lieut.-Colonel, who had amassed a fortune by his long services and careful habits, and what was of most value to her, he was an excellent man and respected by all who knew him. The Colonel might, in point of age, have been her father; but a carriage and all the *et ceteras* of high rank, served as a set off for the inequality of their ages, and accounted for spring smiling so fondly in the embraces of winter.

A Lieutenant of the —th Regiment, made one of these hurried matches, which proved to him the truth of the proverb—"marry in haste and repent at leisure." The lady whom he married was the widow of a captain of a merchantman, who had died while his vessel was lying in port, and as she intended to return to Britain in the ship, which was to sail in a few weeks, no time could be lost. He wooed her in her weeds, and she consented, and as he was ordered

to a post in the interior, with a small detachment, and was unwilling to leave her behind, so her mourning robes were laid aside, and the gaiety of the bridal dress assumed in their place. This affair turned out badly for the Lieutenant, as the lady, besides being blessed with a temper like Xantippe, had likewise a strong predilection for the bottle, and from the commencement they led a very unhappy life. From a lively happy man, he became thoughtful and miserable.

The Lieutenant having occasion to leave home for a few days, to attend a Court Martial, she broke out in a more outrageous manner than ever, and continued drunk most of the time he was absent,—her native attendants having sometimes to fly the house, as she threatened to murder them. When on parade one evening we were surprised to see her step out of the house dressed up with her husband's hat, sword and sash, stagger over to the company, and draw herself up in the most soldier-like style on their front, when she informed them, that they were “a set of d——d dirty rascals, that they disgraced the service, and she intended having every soul of them flogged, now that she had got the command,—and as for you, serjeant, I shall reduce you.” How long this harangue might have continued, it is impossible to say, as they were marched off to a little distance, and dismissed, leaving her behind dealing out her imprecations on them. The Lieutenant, on his return, got information of her behaviour

during his absence; and I suppose, seeing her case a hopeless one, he took her away from the station. I believe she was afterwards sent home to Britain; at least we never saw any more of her.

It was not to be wondered at, that marriages contracted so hurriedly, by parties who were strangers to each other, should sometimes have turned out unhappy—my surprise was that the instances were not more frequent.

The British ladies who sojourn in India fade very fast,—the warm climate, and want of exercise out of doors, which can only be taken for a very short period of the day, are much against them. Their rosy cheeks and ruby lips soon become pale, and their bodies lose their firmness and elasticity and become relaxed; the consequences of the life of inactivity and indolence which they lead. The climate has also very pernicious effects on the constitutions of the children of Europeans, as few of them ever arrive at the age of maturity unless taken out of the country; for which cause, as well as that they may have the benefit of a better education than can be procured there, the parents generally send them to Britain at a very early age.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXXVIII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

IT was a common practice with us in India to keep our birth days, and any man that bore a fair character with his officers, could, on application, get a day's leave. Our usual plan was to give some little entertainment to a few of our comrades with whom we were most intimate.

One of our men of the name of Beveridge, applied to the Major for a day's leave for that purpose and procured it, as also an order to the keeper of the canteen, to allow him to get a gallon of arrack, which he brought to the barracks, and carefully deposited at the head of his bed, for his intended feast next day. A pie was to be added; and about ten of us who were invited to partake of his hospitality and wish him "a long life and a merry one," had laid our account for an hour or two's enjoyment. But there is often "much between the cup and the lip," which was verified in this instance; for Beveridge discovered, on his birth-day-morning, that his arrack bottle had been emptied of its electrifying contents, and refilled with nature's pure element. This was a mortifying case for us, the invited. A consultation was held, when we were soon enabled to fix on

the individuals, who had committed the theft, and Beveridge out of revenge set about preparing a punishment for them, and desired us to take no notice of what had been done.

In place of one pie, as he formerly intended, he got materials for a second, and bringing one of them home, as if for the feast, placed it on the gallery in rear of the barracks to cool, in sight of those whom we suspected of having stolen the arrack. The bait which was thus set took in the exact manner it was intended, for the pie was no sooner exposed to their view, and an opportunity occurring, than they went, lifted off the top paste and extracted the contents, then filled the dish with stones, replaced the cover, and retired to enjoy themselves on their ill got prize.

The difficulty which now beset us was, where or how to procure arrack for the feast, as the hour was fast approaching. This we managed, with some little trouble, and with the assistance of the cook, though not to the extent of the Major's allowance. The time having arrived, and the guests assembled, Beveridge produced his pie and arrack, to which we did ample justice, to the great astonishment of the three marauders, who kept hovering about the room, expecting every moment to hear an explosion. They could hardly believe their senses when they beheld the arrack bottle produced, and all of us seemed gratified with its contents; but their astonishment was tenfold on seeing the pie cut up, and containing

meat instead of stones. After their curiosity was fully awakened, Beveridge requested his guests to eat heartily, informing them, that he had another pie, which he produced, and cutting off a part of the paste, affected great astonishment at its contents, pouring out a volley of oaths on the depredators;—after calming down he put his hand into his pocket, remarking, that whoever had committed the act, had probably partaken of a greater dainty than they were aware of, and produced the head of a cat, the body of which had formed the contents of the pie.

At this moment any one could have picked out the thieves, from the uncomfortable aspect of their features; and one of them, whose gastronomic powers had been more tenderly strung than the others, retired, “double quick,” with evident symptoms that he was about to make restitution of his share of the plunder.

The whole affair was detailed to our officers, who laughed heartily at this new system of administering the *cat*.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XXXIX.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WHILE quartered in the Island of Goa, I became acquainted with an old man named Joseph Pullinger, who had lived many years in the country, and was one of the most singular characters, both in his habits and personal appearance, I have known. From his retired mode of life he went by the name of the hermit. There was certainly something mysterious about him, for, inquisitive as he was, to learn the history of any stranger he met with, yet he studiously avoided giving any account of himself, beyond what he could not conceal. All that was known of him was simply, that he came out to India a common sailor, but being on the coast for some time he left that service and returned to Britain, and in the course of three years appeared again in India, where he continued to dwell, without any intention or even a wish to revisit his native country, from which he had been expatriated a second time for at least twenty years. When I used to see him he must have been about sixty years of age, although he looked much older, and had a very dignified appearance. He had been a handsome man in his youth, but now stooped and had a tremulous gait; still there was something

noble in the expression of the old man's countenance, and his fine white hair and beard, added not a little to his interesting and venerable look. His dwelling, a small cottage of two apartments, was plainly furnished, and had a neat garden attached to it, which he seemed to take great care of. All about him partook of neatness and cleanliness, and every thing done about his little establishment was executed by himself, even to the washing of his clothes, as no female was ever known to enter his dwelling. Attached to the little cottage was a sort of out-house with a door that communicated with one of the apartments, and in which lived what he termed his family, consisting of various birds, natives of the East, in which he took great delight, and must have spent much of his time in training. On calling his feathered children by name or particular sounds, each, as invited, would approach him, and strive with one another for his caresses. One beautiful paroquet, in particular, used to sit on his shoulder, and as he spoke to it, keep rubbing its head on his cheek. Some of these beautiful creatures he had beside him for several years, and the old man used to take great delight in expatiating on their various habits.

He told me a story relative to a green parrot that he showed me, which was somewhat singular, and proves what habit will do with these birds. This bird seemed to divide its time between him and some companions it had made, and generally left him in the morning to join them, especially if the weather was inviting,

and was sure to return before sunset, and if the window was closed it would dab its bill on the wickerwork to inform him of its arrival home. Sometimes he would keep it prisoner after the visitors came for it, when it would show agitation and restlessness, and keep answering their calls, in order to let them know where it was. It returned one evening with its feathers much ruffled, and part of its body a good deal torn and bloody, which he supposed had been from fighting. It did not venture out again for a long time, although it received the usual invitations from its companions and the window left open for its egress. At last it showed a desire to get out, and the old man, from curiosity, watched its movements.— There was only one of its tribe awaiting it in this instance, which it seemed to be aware of from the call; and it appeared determined to have revenge for its former treatment, for it no sooner approached the other than the feathers stood bristling up over its whole body, uttering a peculiar sort of cry, that might be considered as the war-whoop. The visitor also prepared for action, and the two had a very tough battle, which ended in the stranger being beat; but both were so exhausted, that they could hardly stand, and the old man carried the combatants into his house. Next day, the stranger having completely recovered, took the first opportunity it could to get off, but shortly returned with a great many more of its tribe, and the poor fellow inside the house, fearful it might be handed

over to their mercy, crept into a corner, and trembled all the time they were chattering for it. They came every day for a long time, anxious to get it out, but nothing could induce it to join them again, and it continued now to spend its life in-doors, never venturing beyond the porch. The old man seemed quite in his element while expatiating on the dispositions of his family, and nothing tended more to raise one in his good opinion than taking an interest in his stories about them.

He was an excellent mechanic, and all the furniture in the house was made, and the fittings up executed, by himself, and they were very neat. His little library consisted chiefly of historical and religious works, with the contents of which he seemed well acquainted. His conversation often turned on these subjects; and he used sometimes to read a portion of the volumes, and explain very pleasantly to me, any part that I did not seem exactly to comprehend. Josephus was his favorite author.

Except some portions of his naval life, I never heard him touch on anything regarding himself. He had stood the brunt of many a battle, and faced many a storm, but had got tired of a sailor's life long before he quitted it, and used to talk with severity on their general regardlessness. "Thank God," he would say, "I now lead a life of peace and quietness." He used to put many questions to me relative to the general conduct of the men in our Regt., and point out the evils that arose from irregular con-

duct, especially from the use of intoxicating liquors, and told me, that all the time he served, he never was, even in a single instance, the worse of liquor; which conduct, in his humble rank, was the means of his being entrusted with matters which otherwise would not have been allotted to him. “Drinking and swearing,” he used to say, “seemed to be considered a part of a sailor’s education, so generally were they practised.”

The neighbours, with whom he never associated, used to propagate strange stories about him. According to some he had committed murder, and remorse had driven him to live in solitude: others maintained that he had a hatred to women—I suppose from the circumstance of none ever living with him. A great deal of speculation also existed as to his means of supporting himself;—some conjecturing that he was wealthy and a great miser,—others that pride and poverty was the occasion of his singular conduct.

Regarding all the reports concerning him I could say nothing, but that he seemed a singular being—living in a most solitary manner, and seeming to shun society; yet, at the same time, I found him a pleasant companion, and some of my happiest hours at Goa were spent in his society.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XL.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WHILE I was serving in the Edinburgh Militia there was one of our Lieutenants who was a rather singular character. He was an excessive gourmand, and worshipper of Bacchus; but was, withal, a good deal of a humourist. One of his greatest faults, and that which ultimately caused his ruin, was a want of attention to the choice of his companions, he being at all times "hail fellow well met" with all and sundry. While I was with the Regt. he kept within decent bounds; but I afterwards understood that he became so reckless in his conduct that he was obliged to leave the service.

His parents used every endeavour to restrain and reform him, but without effect; and at last they placed him in the family of a clergyman in a retired part of the Highlands of Scotland, where, as there was no society within his reach that would lead him astray, he was from necessity obliged to keep quiet. He remained in that situation until his death, which took place a few years after his retirement.

There are two or three anecdotes illustrative of his gastronomic powers, which I shall here relate.

From what I have above mentioned of his character, you may very readily suppose that he was a great frequenter of tavern parties; and, as a natural consequence, his funds were too often finished before the period for another supply arrived, when he was sometimes under the necessity of applying to his comrades for loans; but not being so punctual in making his payments as he should have been, they at last became indifferent of rendering him assistance in that way. His inventive faculties were often called into use to discover a method that would supply him with means to carry on the manner of living to which he had so long been accustomed.

The course he adopted on one occasion, when his finances were at their very lowest ebb, was of a truly ridiculous nature. He joined a party, who went to spend the evening at a tavern, and he was some time in the house before he recollected that he had not a single *sous* in his purse to enable him to discharge his share of the reckoning; and as his credit was then in very bad odour with his companions, he felt loth to apply to them, especially as there were some strangers present. He set about cudgelling his brains for a plan either of avoiding or meeting the difficulty, but without being able to see his way through it. At last an opening appeared, and he was not long of availing himself of it. One of the strangers in conversation happened to mention some circumstances of a person who possessed powers of swallowing immense quantities of food, and which

he considered as almost incredible. Our gourmand at this part of the conversation, struck in, saying, that he did not consider what had been mentioned, as anything extraordinary, as he himself could excel it. The other scouted the idea of his being able to outdo this person mentioned by him, and offering a bet on the subject. This was just the point he wished to arrive at, and a wager was immediately entered into between them, that he (the Lieutenant) would discuss a square yard of tripe; which having been procured he commenced operations, and in a short time, and apparently with little difficulty, the quantity of tripe disappeared, to the astonishment of the whole company. By this means he got out of his present dilemma, and was not only enabled to discharge his reckoning, but was also furnished with a supply for future exigencies.

On another occasion, being at a party, where a number of strangers were assembled a conversation took place as to what might be considered nauseous food. One of the gentlemen remarked, that he could not conceive anything more disagreeable to the taste than oysters mixed with sugar. "Unpleasant as you may conceive them to be," says the Lieutenant, "I will bet you any money that I will eat an hundred oysters mixed up as you have mentioned." The other instantly accepted the offered wager; and the materials having been provided, the feat was accomplished to the great surprise of all, and the disgust of many present.

The redoubtable Lieutenant on one of the nights of his revelry, upon his return home to his lodgings, "o'er a' the ills o' life victorious," discovered that his worthy landlady had been busily employed during his absence in making her annual supply of jams and jellies. The jars containing the same were arranged upon the table, which presented a temptation too great to be withstood, and after getting properly seated, he fell foul of the dainties, and made sad havoc among them, emptying several of the jars;— he then retired to bed; but his extra dose, not having amalgamated pleasantly with the other ingredients with which it became associated, caused him to spend a very restless night; and his repeated groans awakening the lady, she repaired to his room to ascertain the cause of his distress; when, "Oh horrible! most horrible!" she beheld the *sweet* Lieutenant, stretched on his back, "all clotted with gore." "Murder! murder!" she cried, and bouncing out, called in the watch, informing them that her lodger had cut his throat. The alarm soon spread among the neighbours, and in a few minutes the house was filled. An examination was about being made, when the supposed suicide awakening, sprang up as much astonished as his visitors. A scream of horror arose, of which he demanded the meaning, but received no answer; some of them, however, ventured closer to the body to examine the wound, and it was then discovered that the alarm had no real foundation.— The Lieut., in his dispensation of the above men-

tioned sweets, from the unsteadiness of his hand, had, not only, taken them internally, but had also bestowed a very liberal portion upon his outer man, thus giving him all the appearance of a person covered with blood.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XLI.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WHILE at Goa, it was a common practice with us to give balls, which were generally named after the particular counties to which we belonged, and the expenses connected with them defrayed accordingly. The Ross-shire men would give one in honor of their county; the Sutherland men of theirs; and if any counties claimed but few men belonging to them, two or three of such would unite together to make up sufficient strength to bear the expenses; and a good deal of rivalry was kept up as to which party excelled in their arrangements and in the elegance of the entertainments. The officers were always willing to encourage these parties, and their ladies attending with them, also seemed to enjoy themselves very much. It was a pleasing sight to see so many assembled together in such harmless amusements, keeping up the customs and the remembrance of

their native land. On such occasions the use of the band was always allowed, which added much to the effect.

When such a commemoration-day arrived, all was life and bustle. Some bringing the choicest shrubs and flowers they could get, to decorate the apartments;—others scrubbing and sweeping;—one placing seats;—another candlesticks, and so on; all in the happy anticipation of spending an evening in innocent mirth. The children would skip about clapping their hands impatient for the hour of assembling, and the incantation of the poet could be read in every countenance.

“On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when youth and pleasure meet,
To chace the glowing hours with flying feet.”

When the time arrived, the men, whose entertainment it happened to be, were waiting to receive their guests, find seats for them, and attend to their comforts; not, as you may suppose, with the elegance of a Chesterfield, but I doubt not, with as much sincerity.

The balls were generally opened with a good Scotch reel to a merry Scotch tune, and there was no small degree of emulation amongst the men as to their powers in the Terpsichorian art, and rival sets were formed to bear away the laurels. The genuine Scotch reel was rattled off in fine style, and the palm of victory awarded by competent umpires appointed for the

purpose. Various hornpipes were also danced by volunteers, such as they had been taught in their boyish days, and they gave good evidence of not having forgot them. The Irish jig was not neglected, and the sons of the Emerald Isle proved, without a doubt, that they also had studied the *heeling* art.

There was one lady, the wife of an officer of the 86th, who attended one of these balls, whose elegant dancing acted like magic upon us. All had admired the grace of her movements, during the early part of the evening, in various dances with different officers, but it was not till she took a part in a *minuet*, with three others, that she so much astonished us. Her graceful movements and handsome figure, gave her more the appearance of a sylph than an inhabitant of this earth. Every eye was rivetted, and every voice hushed, enchanted by one

“ Whose fairy form was ne'er to be forgot.”

After the officers and their ladies retired, an old Scotch dance called “ Bab on the bowster ” was introduced, and which universally wound up the evening's entertainment, causing a good deal of laughter.

Another kind of amusement that was resorted to, was the acting of plays, and which occasionally wiled away an evening very pleasantly. Nationality was shown in this also, as any play relative to Scotland, such as “ Douglas,” “ the Gentle Shepherd,” &c., was sure to have a good audience, and some of the

characters were really well sustained; while others that were intended to “melt and fire the heart by turns” were sometimes, from blundering or awkwardness, on the part of the performer, turned into ridicule; and what the author intended for deep tragedy, was often dished up to us in a very different style. Some of our performers, ere they had commenced “to strutt and fret their little hour upon the stage,” would have done well to have studied Hamlet’s address to the players; for I have seen them not only tear a passion into rags, but their own clothes into the bargain; but possibly most of them had never heard of it.

Between the play and farce, as is customary, a comic song, ballet dance, or something else, in the shape of interlude, was given to make up a variety in the amusements of the evening. And it would occasionally happen that the name of some one who excelled either as a singer or a dancer, was so frequently called out, that he would be under the necessity of stepping forward, although his performance did not form part of the bill of fare for the evening. Demands were also made on the musicians for national airs, which were generally complied with.

Among the various pieces performed by our amateurs, there was a Turkish one, in which some men of colour were requisite; but the poor fellows who had these parts assigned them, found afterwards that they had entered rather too deeply into

their characters, some wag having mixed up a strong vegetable dye in the composition with which they had to besmear their faces and hands; and it was only when they wished to return to their own fair semblance, that they discovered the trick. Every thing was tried to wash off the colour, but nothing would do, so they at last gave it up as hopeless and trusted to time, which alone made good their former complexions. A reward was offered to any one who would make known the individual that had been guilty of the act; but he was never discovered: if he had, the men intended, that, as one part of the punishment, he should have been blackened with the dye from head to foot. Upon the Moors, as they were called, falling into the ranks, it was impossible for either officers or men to keep their gravity, their appearance was so very ridiculous, however much we felt for them. Some of them took it much to heart; but one Irish lad used to enjoy the laugh along with the rest of us, and wonder what his old dad would say, were he to witness the effect of the climate on his boy.

It was customary on the King's birth day, for each man to receive one Rupee, to drink his Majesty's health and provide a dinner, which was nicely prepared, and besides the usual substantial dishes, consisted of many of the luxuries the country produced. After the dinner was placed on the table, and previous to our seating ourselves, we were visited by the commanding officer, accompanied by a few of the

others, who went round and inspected the different messes, to ascertain if every thing was comfortably arranged. Upon his approach, each mess presented him with a glass of wine, which, having tasted, he addressed the men, expressing his gratification at seeing every thing right, and desired them to conduct themselves with propriety, and thereby show the greater respect for their worthy Sovereign, whose natal day they were assembled to commemorate, and wishing them every enjoyment, retired.

The game of cricket was another amusement with us, and as several of the officers were very fond of it, they used to turn out and make up matches, which were often keenly contested. One officer in particular was an excellent hand; his bowling was tremendous, and at the wicket it was next to an impossibility to put him down. This game should be encouraged in the army, especially in warm climates, where there is such inducement to inactivity, and prevent that system of lolling and sleeping which the men fall into, and which there can be no doubt nourishes that baneful disorder of the liver to which Europeans are so subject in our Eastern possessions.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XLII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

ONE of our serjeants, who acted as Regimental schoolmaster, was a man whose amiable and good qualities deserve to be recorded, but I fear my humble powers will but poorly perform the task; still, a grateful remembrance of the many fatherly admonitions I received from him, prompts me to make the attempt.

He was highly respected by all who knew him, and well he deserved to be so. Independent of the duties which his situation demanded of him, he voluntarily undertook others; and many, who have passed to that "bourne whence no traveller returns," have blessed the day they knew him. He was particularly kind to the sick, and attended alike to their bodily and spiritual comfort. He had such a calm and feeling manner about him, that he was sure to win his way to the heart of any man, but especially of one languishing on a sickbed.

A comrade of mine who was confined in the hospital with a fever, and who, poor fellow lived, as too many of us did, regardless alike of God and man, told me one day when I had gone to see him, that he was conscious he would never recover. He talked to

me of the unhappy state of his mind. All his past conduct, he said, rushed upon him and he felt now, what his parents had often told him, that a day of repentance would arrive—and then, and not till then, would their admonitions be respected; I tried to soothe him; but what could I, who had lived nearly as regardless of holy things as himself, say, that would tend to soften his anguish and produce a better state of mind within him.

After listening to him for some time, as the only means I could think of for his relief, I ventured to propose to him that I would ask serjeant M^cIntyre to accompany me on my visit to him next day. He hesitated; but I continued to urge him to permit me to do so, and having procured his consent, I waited on the worthy serjeant and told him the nature of my errand, enquiring at the same time, what hour would be the most convenient. He drew out his watch—looked at it, and continuing in deep thought for a minute or two, replied, that as he seemed to be so unhappy, he thought it would be better to go immediately and see him. We crossed over to the hospital, and I went up to the bedside and told the sick man that we were come now in place of to-morrow. He looked to the kind-hearted man, and holding out his hand to him, shed a flood of tears. “Your friend tells me,” said the serjeant, “that you are unhappy—what is the cause of your unhappiness?” “My past life,” he replied. “And who,” said the serjeant,

“can look upon his past life, and feel otherwise than unhappy.”

He conversed with the sick man on the kindest manner, and then proposed to him that we should address ourselves to that Being, who showers down his mercy even on the wicked; he then offered up a fervent prayer in behalf of the dying man, imploring forgiveness and protection for him; after which he read some portions of scripture, and folding in the leaves of several places which he wished him to examine, left him, promising to return the next day; but desiring the sick man to send for him at any time either by night or by day, if he could serve him.

On our way back, the serjeant took the opportunity of imparting to me a great deal of good advice, and pointing out the state of my comrade as a beacon to warn me of my danger. I felt every word that he addressed to me to be true, and proposed immediate amendment; but the impression was evanescent, although at the time I thought it would have proved a lesson for the remainder of my life.

The young man lingered on for ten days, and the serjeant continued to attend him, doing all he could to comfort him and to prepare him for that change, which so shortly awaited him. I sat up with him occasionally, and he talked much to me of M'Intyre's attention, which he said had reconciled him to his fate, and that he now looked forward with pleasure to the hour of dissolution. Many others, be-

sides this young man met with a kind adviser in M^cIntyre, whose time was much occupied in such acts.

There being no church we could attend in that country, M^cIntyre invited all those who chose to meet with him on the Sabbath evenings for the purpose of reading and explaining the Scriptures, of which he had an extensive knowledge. To those that did attend, and I am sorry to say they were but few, he took every pains to impress on their minds the great importance of becoming acquainted with the word of truth, and after delivering a very impressive address, closed the meeting with prayer.

M^cIntyre stood very high in the opinion of the officers, and when any of the sick men expressed a wish for any little luxury which they thought they could take, the request had only to be backed by M^cIntyre (and this he never refused to do) in order to be granted.

The fate of this good man was a melancholy one; he embarked along with the second division of invalids on board the Cloyne for Britain. The vessel was never heard of after leaving the Cape of Good Hope, so that there can be no doubt that all perished.—There were not less than three hundred souls on board—M^cIntyre's wife, a most amiable woman, and their two little boys were amongst the number.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XLIII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

A PARTY of us, consisting of five privates and Donald M'Leod one of the pipers, procured leave of absence from our commanding officer to go to Agoade to take leave of some acquaintances we had in the 86th previous to their departure on an expedition to the Isle of France; and for this purpose we engaged a double canoe. We arrived safe at our friends' quarters, where we were very kindly received and spent a pleasant day amongst them. As the evening approached we began to make preparations for our return, and a little before dark we took leave of our acquaintances, and again took to the canoe. We had got about half way from the main land, towards the Island of Goa, when a squall overtook us, which we tried to bear up against, and had it not been for the conduct of one of the natives who was working the canoe we would have reached;—but the fellow had taken too much arrack, and through his carelessness, in loosing his paddle, we were left to drift at the mercy of the winds and waves, and ran a great risk of being all lost. It was so dark by this time, that any attempt to recover the paddle was useless; so with the remaining one we kept working as we best

could to make the Island, which we accomplished near midnight, much exhausted, as the canoe kept shipping water all the time, and every one had to exert himself in bailing, otherwise we should have perished. Not having any proper utensil with us for the purpose of bailing, we were under the necessity of putting our hats and shoes into requisition, which proved to be very poor substitutes.

At one period the water was gaining on us so rapidly, that it seemed impossible our frail bark could continue long afloat, and one of the party seeing the danger of our situation, began to resign himself to his sad fate. He knelt down to pray; but M'Leod, who was rather a strange sort of a fellow, told him, that if he did not keep bailing along with the rest, he would pitch him overboard, asking him if he could not both bail and say his prayers at the same time. The poor fellow immediately got up, and again set to work, acting upon the suggestion of the piper, whose determined perseverance and example helped much to carry us through.

We effected a landing at Panjum, about six miles from our quarters, and after dragging the canoe safe on to the beach, set off in quest of lodgings for the night, as we felt so fatigued that we could not proceed further until we got refreshed. The only place that would receive us, was one of the lowest arrack-shops in the outskirts of the town, where we got some supper, along with a supply of arrack; after

which some matts were laid on the floor for us to sleep upon.

In a short time we lay down to procure some rest, with the intention of starting very early next morning for Cabo; but our repose was soon interrupted by the annoyance of mosquitoes, along with the croaking of frogs that inhabited a large tank of stagnant water in the neighbourhood of the house, which put sleep out of the question; and we were discussing the propriety of an immediate start for our barracks, when M'Leod, unknown to any of us, adjusted his pipes, and commenced one of his favorite tunes. It was of no use to attempt to stop him, he being as stubborn as a rock, and his noisy instrument had aroused every soul in the house, most of them in a dreadful state of alarm at being awoke at such an unusual hour, and with such a hideous noise as the pipes produced. Many of them rushed out of the house in a state of nudity, and ran into the street, screaming. Donald, in the meantime, playing away with all his might.

The landlord, a Portuguese, having procured a light, made, along with a party of men, an attack on our apartment; but we beat them off, and shutting the door, two of us sat down behind it, to keep them from making a second entrance. Several ineffectual attempts were made to force open the door, but at last a tremendous shove brought it completely off its hinges, and in came our assail-

ants by the dozen. A general engagement took place, during which Donald still kept blowing his pipes to encourage us, till at last the lights were put out in the scuffle, and we were captured one by one and dragged out of the house, which put a stop to the sweet sounds of the pipes.

The whole party were marched off to the guard-house, and kept locked up till morning, when we were carried before the Viceroy, who, after pointing out the impropriety of our conduct, told us that he would report it to our Colonel. At first he seemed very much enraged at us; and in his broken English declared that we were a disgrace to the army. After his first burst of passion was over, Donald applied to him to have the pipes returned, saying they were the King's property, and he could not return to Cabo without them. They were given up to Donald, who no sooner got hold of them, than he began to argue in favor of the elegance of their music, and offered to give his honor a specimen; which the gentleman declined. Donald still persisted, and told him that it was out of compliment to him that he made the offer. The Viceroy smiled; which Donald interpreting into a grant of his request, struck up, and having given him a fair proof of his powers, and of that of his instrument, asked him, if it was not an "infernal shame for a man to be pelted and imprisoned for playing such beautiful music." The Viceroy took a hearty laugh at Donald's earnest remark, and told him that the untimely hour and unearthly sounds of

his music were the cause of his misfortune. Donald held out his hand, which the Viceroy accepted; "G—d bless you for that," said Donald, "there is no such other music in this wide world, and your honor will find, when you get to heaven, that this is quite correct." The Viceroy was convulsed with laughter.

Having got fairly out of the scrape we returned to Cabo, somewhat sceptical of Donald's opinion as to the sounds of his instrument, seeing what evil it had brought upon us.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.



LETTER XLIV.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WHILE in the warm latitudes on our homeward voyage, the ship was frequently visited by sharks, some of which we caught; and one in particular, was allowed to be the largest fish of the kind any on board had seen. It measured nine feet long, and four in girth round the thickest part of its body; and adhering to it, were several small sucker-fish. It was by far the most formidable looking fish I had ever beheld, and its presence on the deck of the vessel created quite a commotion with all on

board. The sailors call them *sea-lawyers*, and were delighted at hooking and bringing him up with the merry yeo heave o', while the landsmen showed their astonishment at his portliness. On bringing him up alongside, he kicked up a fine row and slapped his tail most furiously on the ship's side, and on the deck, making them both ring. Their strength is tremendous, even out of the water, and many seemed alarmed at the appearance of this one. I had always understood that when a shark swallowed anything, that it had first to turn upon its back, and that expert swimmers, with any sharp weapon in their possession, could, by taking advantage of these movements, from that circumstance, so annoy the sharks as ultimately to enable them to escape. I would pity any one who had occasion to make attempts of that kind. I observed this one in particular, and found that it merely inclined a little to one side, and neither the time nor extent of its movements could give any such advantage as I had been led to believe.

After it was killed, which occupied some little time, one of the sailors, who was fond of a joke, prevented it from being cut up till he would get some preliminary matters arranged, and an opportunity of carrying his whim into effect. He procured a pair of trowsers which one of our men had lost some days previous, and giving them a good soaking, crammed them into the shark; which being done, another suggested a further delay in the dissection, and a letter was written, addressed to one of the men, pur-

porting to be from his brother in Ireland, dated some months back; a third brought a tobacco pouch which he had stolen some time before, and all were carefully deposited. Information was then given that the mighty monster was to be opened—good care being taken that the owners of the various deposits were present.

While the operation was going on, one remarked that he had never heard what sharks exactly lived upon; another tried to solve that difficulty; a third stated the variety of things he had, at different times, seen taken out of them; and their wonder was getting wound up to the highest pitch, when the fellow who took the most active part in opening up the fish, got to the trowsers, pulled them out, and held them up, to the astonishment of the *greenhorns*. The man who had lost the trowsers sprang forward and claimed them as being his; and after he had fairly proved his property, by giving almost day and date for every patch and mending they had received, they were with apparent reluctance handed over to him. His astonishment was great indeed, and he swore he would never part with them, and that when he got home he would have the circumstance taken notice of in the newspapers. After a little while the tobacco pouch was produced, and a second consternation pervaded them. It was claimed also, and given up; when again out came the letter, which being a little soiled and wet and stained with blood, was cleaned and found to be addressed to “—— ———, private

in the 47th, now lying in the East Indies." The man seemed perfectly astonished when he heard his name read from the back of the letter, and it was handed over to him; but being unable to decipher it himself, he requested that some one would be so kind as to do it for him. Great care was taken to avoid tearing it, and being carefully dried, he was informed of its contents, which were all connected with family matters. What with joy and wonder he seemed almost frantic; but his sorrow for those on board the ship, which must have gone to the bottom, acted as a damper upon him. The various conjectures started were amusing enough, and some seemed, and others were bewildered. One offered him a sum of money for the letter, another exceeded in amount what was first offered; but no,—he would never part with it.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XLV.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I SHALL now give you some idea of an army on the march in India, with the various attendants who form, in numbers, considerably more than the fighting

men. The baggage, munitions, &c., are borne by elephants and buffalos, which are attended by native drivers. Besides these, there are three classes of natives who accompany the army. The first class are called *dobbies* who are employed as washermen to the soldiers, the second are the cooks, and the third the water carriers. To a mess of twelve men, whether on the march or in quarters, there is one dobbie and one cook allowed, and to every company a waterman; these, with their families, officers' servants, drivers, and tent pitchers, form a singular group. The washermen also dress the men's clothes. They have a great dislike to articles of European manufacture, and when washing, you will hear them singing and swearing away at the stuff, and slashing it most unmercifully on the natched board, which is used for the purpose. They dip the articles to be cleaned into water, and then making them swing round, come slap upon this rough board; which system, even with gentle usage, would soon destroy them, but when extra roughness is resorted to, a very few washings finish them. It is provoking to hear these natives calling out, at every sweep they give, "there you go you d——d European, now for you—soon do for you,"—and keeping on in such a strain until they have nearly pelted the clothes to rags. But when they take hold of anything of native manufacture they tell it that it shall be kindly used, and they give it the easiest washing that their rough system will admit of. These attendants get all the

victuals left at the mess, which is generally sufficient to feed both them and their families.

The marches are in most cases made in the afternoon, when the heat of the day is over, and, if much expedition is required, during the night. The bivouacks are made in the open air, with no covering but the blue vault of heaven, and the dew often affects the men's health very much. There are no marches so fatiguing as those in India, for the body loses its strength; and even the afternoons and nights are too oppressive for such exertion.

These parties, when on their march, are often visited by jugglers, snake charmers, rope dancers, and even fortune tellers. The tricks which the jugglers perform, are the same as those which some of their number have exhibited in Britain—playing with brass balls, swallowing a sword, and dancing on the tight rope. Their various movements with the brass balls are the result of years of constant practice; and I have been told, that when learning, they will sit from morning until evening under the shade of a tree practising; and they continue in this way till they consider themselves capable of appearing in public.

These camp followers are generally Hindoos who have lost caste. Many of them are regardless characters, and some of them the most expert thieves in existence. Their pilfering practices are mostly carried on during the night, by creeping into the officers' tents and carrying away anything of value they

can lay their hands on. They crawl about in search of plunder with such tact and caution that it requires extreme watchfulness to detect them, and if they find they are discovered they are off like a shot. One of our officers, during a march, had his tent entered in the night several times, and various articles stolen, and not being able to ascertain anything regarding how or where they had been taken, determined to keep watch with some others, and if possible to catch the thief. In the evening they lay down as usual, as if for repose. All was silence till about midnight, when a slight rustling noise was heard around the tent, which continued, with short pauses, for some time. The thief, thinking all asleep, at last crawled into the tent, keeping flat on his stomach and feeling in every direction to get hold of some plunder, at length laid his hands upon the gentleman's clothes, which had been put off previous to lying down. He rolled them up in a bundle, and was slowly and quietly creeping to that part of the tent by which he had entered, when the officer made a spring and landed on the top of him. The alarm raised the rest in the tent, some of whom, though lying awake for the purpose of catching the fellow, had never heard his movements, he having kept so quiet. He was bound hands and feet and made fast for the night. When day-light arrived he turned out to be one of the men belonging to the elephant baggage train; and a search was made among the things he had charge of, when an immense number of stolen articles were recovered,

which were claimed by various persons. The thief received a good flogging as a punishment, and was turned off from the camp, with a promise, that should he appear again, the amount of his punishment should be doubled.

While at Goa we were visited by parties of these jugglers and fortune tellers, who gave us specimens of their various acquirements. The snake charmers were the first to commence operations.— One of them took out a perforated cane and began playing, when the snakes, which had hitherto been lying a-sleep in baskets, crept out and seemed to be influenced by the sounds of the instrument, for after dancing and twining about in various forms, they approached their masters and twisted themselves in different attitudes, first round their legs, and then their arms, and at last twined themselves round their bodies and necks, the music playing to them during the whole of the performance; but when it ceased they immediately uncoiled themselves, went to their baskets as before, and lay perfectly still. Whether it is their fondness for the music or the effect of repeated training, that causes them to act in the above manner, I cannot tell; but the general opinion among us was the former.

Next came the jugglers, who went through their performance, which excited great astonishment in those who had never witnessed such feats of dexterity before. The fortune tellers also had their turn.— A party of them approached a few of us who were

resting below a tree, and offered to tell us our good fortune, or rather, I believe, they said to ensure us of good luck for the rest of our lives; and having got permission to proceed in favor of our party, they lighted a fire, into which they threw a perfumed powder, and afterwards placed upon it a pot of water. They then began dancing round the fire, sometimes stirring the water, and repeating an incantation in our favor, which was translated to us as they proceeded. They kept at this for a long time, and then informed us of our various good fortunes, and asked for their reward. We all, with the exception of one, gave them some trifle of money; but he bestowed upon them a hearty cursing, abusing them as impostors, and threatening to beat them if they did not make off. They did not go away, but commenced their operations anew, moving round the pot, in a contrary direction to what they had formerly done, which, we were informed, was to undo all that had been done for the man who had given them abuse, instead of the recompense they expected. This, the man was no sooner informed of, than he started over to them, and snatching up a burning stick out of their fire, made them scamper off as fast as their legs could carry them, taking their pot as a prize. We, however, gave them back their pot, at which time they told us that the man who had abused them, would fall in the next engagement he went into. Their prediction was not verified, as I am not aware that he was ever wounded. It was

curiosity and nothing else, that induced us to listen to them. Silly as all their prognostications were, some of our men were weak enough to believe in them. But I never heard of anything transpiring that could persuade me that these fortune tellers possessed the powers they professed.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XLVI.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

IT may not be here deemed amiss to relate a few of the many narrow and providential escapes from death, which you may well suppose to have occurred in the course of the struggle for the possession of the Island of Java.

Upon our first entering Batavia, the Rifle companies were quartered in a large house, situated at a short distance out of the city. We had that day received no allowance of liquor, and one of our men, of the name of Mathewson, went out a little before dark to look for a grog shop, in order to procure some. About an hour after dusk, he returned unsuccessful. As he was entering the building, he observed a man descending a trap with a slow match in his hand. Mathewson called out to him, and

asked him what he was going to do with the match. The fellow directly ascended, drew a knife, and attempted to stab the soldier; but he as quickly drew his sword and swore that he would run him through if he either attempted to strike him or to make his escape. Mathewson then called for assistance, when a number of the men rushed out and the fellow was secured. Some of the officers having also made their appearance, a light was procured and a descent was made by the trap in order that a search might be instituted. Upon reaching the bottom, several barrels of gunpowder were discovered, which instantly explained the use to which the slow match was to have been put. The party reascended, and informed the commanding officer of the circumstance, who instantly ordered the bugle to sound the alarm, when the soldiers, without delay, put on their accoutrements, took up their arms and proceeded to the street, where they were formed into companies, and marched to the main square of the city, and there lay upon their arms the whole night. Next morning the culprit was examined as to his reasons for attempting to blow up the house in which the soldiers were quartered, and who were his accomplices; but he would give no answer. He was then handed over to the Provost-Martial who made speedy work of it.

Upon one occasion, while we were erecting our works opposite Cornelius, a party of fifty were ordered to the batteries to assist at the works. Upon

returning, we had to pass along the open road exposed to the enemy's shot. We made what haste we could to get out of our dangerous situation; but before we had been enabled to do so, we observed a flash from one of the enemy's mortars; when immediately the officer in command gave the order that we should throw ourselves flat upon the ground, which we did, and it was the work of a moment only. The shell past over us, bursting very near to where we were lying and the contents flew about like hail, without doing us any injury. We then immediately sprung to our feet and made the most of our way to the wood where our Regiment bivouacked. At the time the shell was discharged, a Sepoy was passing along the road, apparently unobservant of danger, until it burst quite close to him, and, I may almost say miraculously, without doing him any harm. Upon hearing the report of the shell, he very coolly turned round his head, and cried out, "what a start you have given me."

The following day we were ordered to proceed again to the batteries, to complete the works, when the enemy, watching the opportunity, while we had to pass the exposed part of the road, fired off several cannon at the same instant among our party, when three of them fell—one poor fellow mortally wounded, a ball having taken off both his legs, a little above the knees. We carried off the wounded men to a place of safety, and on examining them, found one had received a slight contusion in the head, from which

he soon recovered, another had all the toes of one foot carried away, and the foot a good deal injured otherwise. The young man who lost his legs, died in a very short time after we set him down, the loss of blood being so great. At first he did not seem to know that his legs were off, and only found out the state he was in when raised off the ground. One of his comrades who stood beside him, received a message to be conveyed to his mother, who resided in Edinburgh. He then looked up to the officer in command, at the same time offering him his hand, which he took, and enquired "if he was satisfied with the manner in which he had done his duty." "Yes," replied the officer, "and I regret the loss of so good a soldier." Holding the officer still by the hand, he looked round the party who stood beside him, and then turning his eyes towards heaven, asked forgiveness for the many sins he had been guilty of—closed them—and expired. It was an affecting scene, and none seemed more impressed with it than our officer.

This young man was a steady soldier, and had every prospect of getting forward had he lived, as he possessed all the qualifications requisite to enable him to discharge the various duties—a good education, sober habits, and strictly attentive to his duty.

While engaged on the 10th, we were extended over a part of the field, to annoy as much as possible some of the enemy who were posted in advance like ourselves, to cover some Artillery they were planting,

and for a while the two sets of scattered combatants were employed picking out each other. The opposite party had a few men pretty near us, who were sheltered by a small patch of trees, behind which, they loaded their pieces, and stepped out to fire. Several of our men had fallen by their shots, when Douglas, (the young man just alluded to,) being an excellent marksman, stood, with his piece ready, and declared he would bring down the first man that exposed himself to him. The expression was scarcely uttered till he had an opportunity of trying his skill, when off went his rifle, and the man, leaping up from the shock of his well aimed ball, fell. "Now," said he, "I could bet any money that I have sent that ball through his head; but we will see by and by, when we get on to the ground." He loaded again, keeping watch for a second chance, when another of the enemy stepped out from the opposite side of the thicket, and fell also. "See there," said Douglas, "that chap's got it through his breast." The bugle now sounded the advance, when the enemy's skirmishers fell back, and we occupied their ground.—Curiosity prompted some of them to examine the dead bodies, and Douglas's balls were found as he had said. He was allowed to be one of the best shots in the Regiment, and this circumstance added not a little to his former reputation. The Captain of our company complimented him on his superior firing, and reported the circumstance to the Colonel, who promised to promote him.

Several years afterwards, I accidentally met with this young man's brother, who being informed that I was from the 78th, enquired of me if I had known him, and when informed that we belonged to the same company, he made me promise to call and see his mother, stating, how much she would be gratified at meeting with one who had shared in the toils and dangers of war along with her favorite son. I accordingly kept my promise, with the young man and he conducted me to his mother's residence, where I was very kindly received and requested to take tea with them. I remained several hours, and many questions were asked me regarding her dear Johnny, as she always called him. She seemed truly happy when I informed her of his good conduct, and the general respect with which we held him in the company, and related many circumstances which she listened to with much pleasure. Shortly before leaving, she enquired of me if Johnny had ever told any of us the reason he had for becoming a soldier. I replied, that although I had often heard others detailing such matters, yet I could not tax my memory with ever having heard him touch on that subject. In most instances, I observed, it turned out to be a drunken spree that inspired us to become heroes.—“Poor fellow,” said she, “his was a very different case,” and bursting into tears, told me, “that it was her and her misfortunes that caused him to follow the drum.” After she had recovered herself, she related the circumstance to me, which could not but

increase my respect for his memory. She had been left a widow, with three sons to provide for, and had struggled on for several years to bring them up, during which time she had often a hard fight to support them. At last matters became worse, and she was about to be turned out of her house for want of money to pay her rent, and every thing belonging to her was seized by the landlord. Her son, on whom she had depended much, to enable her to weather the various storms she had buffeted, was unfortunately out of employment; seeing no prospect of obtaining any, tired at going idle, and heart-broken at the distress she was in, without having the means of assisting her, he determined to save her from being turned out of her home, by offering himself as a substitute for a person who had been drawn for the Perth Militia; and it was not till he had settled every thing, and received the bounty, all of which he brought to her, that she ever dreamed he had any intention of becoming a soldier. The poor woman was again overcome with her feelings, and for some time could hardly proceed with the remainder of the account she was giving me of her son. She at last briefly related the rest of her story. He had joined his Regiment, and after undergoing the necessary training with other recruits, took the first opportunity he could get of volunteering into the line, joined the 78th, and departed for India, where, poor fellow, he soon found a grave. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XLVII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE circumstance which I have just narrated, calls to my recollection, an interview I had near Dalkeith, about the same time, with an old sweetheart of one of our grenadiers.

Having occasion to travel to that part of the country, and feeling thirsty, I stepped into a small thatched house, in the village through which I was passing, to obtain a drink of water, which was given me, accompanied with an invitation to sit down and rest myself; and, as the heat of the day had fatigued me, I was very glad to accept of the offer. After conversing for some time on various subjects, some interrogatories were put to me in the usual way, as to whither I was travelling, whence I had come, and so on. During our conversation I happened to inform the woman of the house, a strapping good-looking quean, that I was a pensioner from the 78th, which I had no sooner stated, than she seemed quite delighted, and asked me if I had been in India,—I told her I had. “Did ye ken ane Jock Johnston in your Regiment,” she eagerly enquired. I replied that in the grenadier company there was one of that

name. She then questioned me as to his appearance, and various other circumstances, when my answers proved to her satisfaction, that it was the same person. From her excitement, and being a good-looking person, like him, I was led to conclude that she was his sister, and therefore, enquired, in my turn, if he was any relation to her. “Na, na,” said she, “he wasna a drap’s bluid to me,—but had it no been for his auld hag o’ a mither he wad hae been tho.’ But,” continued she, “I’se tell ye a’ about it:—

“I was fee’d by Jock’s faether at Dalkeith, for sax months, an’ gaed hame to my place at Whitsunday, an’ liket it weel. Jock, puir fallow, workit on the farm wi’ his faether, an’ was a sort o’ a grieve to the auld man. I was na lang hame to my place, till he began to keek owre his shouther at me, the meanin’ o’ whilk I kenn’d fou’ brawly, but ne’er let on, seein’ vera weel, that had ony o’ the auld folks got an inklin’ o’ sic like, it wad breed mischeef. I keepit as muckle out o’ his gait as I could, but he took ilka chance to get near me. It was nae use to tell him what his faether or mither wad say; for he aye swore he wad hae me for his wife, an nae ither. An’ then he wad roose me about my bonnie face an’ jimpit waist, an’ sic like, till I wad threaten to compleen to his mither—no that I wad hae dune sic a thing, ye ken, but just to gliff him a wee. It was o’ nae use, for gang where I wad, or whate’er I was about, Jock was shure to be no far aff. His mi-

ther was a gleg body, an' sune fand out that he was ower head an' lugs in luvè wi' me, an' was na lang in tellin' him her mind; when Jock took the pet, and ran awa to Edinburgh, an' gaed for a sodger. His faether offered to pay the smart siller, an' get him hame again; but Jock wadna come unless his mither wad gae her consent to our gettin' married, an' that was out o' the question wi' her. She had ower muckle pride for that, sae Jock was marched aff to some place in England, an' we heard nae mair o' him till he was takin' ship for India, when he wrote his faether, an me too. I had left the auld folk lang afore this, an' ne'er expekkit to hear frae him again, tho' mony a sair heart his gaein' awa gied me.—He was a braw man, an' no ane through a' the kintry side could match him. In his letter to me, he said he wad ne'er forget me, an' forbid me to marry ony ane till he cam hame. Poor fallow, he ne'er liv'd to come hame, an' it wasna till lang after I kenn'd o' his death that I thought o' takin' ony body. But ye see the guid-man, right or wrang, wad hae me, an' I just said to him aye night, after he had powthered my showther, that he might gie in the lines now. I hae gotten a guid man, an' a weel doin' man too, an' I hae nae faut to him, but I canna forget Jock for a' that, as I ken fou weel he wad ne'er hae forgotten me.—He was a braw man, an' I often think o' him."

How long the woman would have kept up her praise of Jock, as she called him, it is hard to say, had not her husband come home, whom she informed

of the circumstance ; but merely taking notice of the fact, that I had served in the same Regiment with her former lover. I did not think the husband relished even the little information she gave, and more so, on observing that she did not attempt to speak out so freely before him, regarding her tender recollections of Jock. Possibly he had heard it all before, and it was unnecessary to repeat it. Still I could not help remarking in my mind on the change his presence made on her loquacious praise of Jock.— Had I thought proper, I could have given her some information regarding him, that would have gone far to prove, that whatever injunctions he had laid on her, he had taken care to impose none upon himself; but thought it was much better to leave her under the belief I found her;—that “he was a braw man, an’ no ane in a the kintry side could match him.”— He was certainly a fine-looking man, tall, muscular and well proportioned ; but beyond that I must

“ No further seek his merits to disclose
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode.”

Having had a comfortable rest, I bade them good bye, and proceeded on my journey, musing over the circumstances connected with this unexpected interview, which, with the accidental introduction, and the mistaken idea she laboured under on many points relative to the grenadier, served me with several subjects for reflection.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XLVIII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

LET an old soldier go where he will, he is sure to meet with some with whom he had served, and I have been both amused and astonished at these unexpected rencounters with fellow campaigners, in places and under circumstances singular enough.

On my return from India, and while residing for a few weeks in London, I was suddenly brought to a stand one afternoon, in the Borough, on meeting the funeral of some grandee, that was moving on in slow and solemn pomp, at recognising an old comrade in one of the advanced guard, rigged out with cloak, scarf and band, and bearing a long black pole with something like a half inflated baloon attached to it. Disguised as he was I knew him at once, and was much puzzled to understand how he had ever been able to work his features into such a demure expression, for Ned was celebrated among us as one of the sons of Momus. But time, thought I, works mighty changes, and here it has metamorphosed as merry a fellow as ever shouldered a musket.

Not having any thing particular to attend to, I turned, and followed the funeral to the church yard, and when Ned's duties were over, went forward to

him, when he instantly recognised me, and giving me a friendly shake of his hand, expressed his astonishment that I should have known him in his canonicals. These Ned soon doffed, and invited me to adjourn to take a glass, and talk over our adventures, which invitation I accepted.

Ned told me he had been buffeted about for several years after leaving the army, and suffered many privations, but had at last got the situation he now held, which was porter in an extensive undertaker's establishment, in the City; and that in addition to his other duties, his master employed him occasionally, with others in his employment,

“ By letting out their persons by the hour,
To mimic sorrow when the heart's not sad.”

I told him how much I was amused at meeting him in the character of a mute, and paid him several compliments as to the manner in which he acquitted himself, being so very different in every respect from what I had been accustomed to see him; at which he took a hearty laugh, and then set about making enquiries after many of his old comrades, whose various fates I related to him, as far as I knew.— Before parting, I promised to meet him the following evening, when Ned took me to his house, and I was gratified to see that he was so comfortable, and told him that as he seemed so cheerful and happy in his little establishment, I thought he could afford occasionally to make the appearance of grief, such as

I had seen him doing on the previous day. Ned admitted that it was by grieving he was happy.

After my return to Edinburgh, when on my way home to my lodgings, near the head of Leith Walk, on a fine moonlight morning, somewhere about the "wee short hour ayont the twall," I observed a group of men forming a circle on a broad part of the pavement, and singing the King's Anthem. Curious to know what could occasion a body of men to be so employed, at such an unseasonable hour, I crossed over to reconnoitre, when they invited me to join them, which I had no sooner done, than I discovered that they had been

"————— bousing at the nappy,
And getting fou and unco happy."

For most of them seemed half tipsy, some three quarters, and one, who was lying flat on his back, "quite royal." After remaining a while in this place, they lifted up the drunk man, some taking a leg, others an arm, one his head, and another a foot, and carried him a little further on his way home, and then laid him down again to rest themselves, singing away as before, at "God save the King." At the end of one of the stages, and after they had laid down their burden, being fearful that his handkerchief was too tight round his neck, I stooped down to examine it, and if requisite, to have it loosened; when, getting a distinct view of his features, I enquired of his companions if his name was Gordon,

which they told me it was. I then informed them that we had served together in the East Indies, where I left him some years ago, and had never heard of his return. They stated to me that he had only arrived in Edinburgh the day before, having been discharged with a pension of ninepence per day, and they had met to welcome him back again,—most of them being his companions previous to his enlisting. I could not but feel sorry to see him commencing such a career on his return to his native place; and after assisting them in carrying him to his lodgings, saw him laid on his bed, I proceeded to my home.

The circumstance of his having so recently left the Regiment, induced me to visit him early on the following day, to obtain some intelligence concerning my old comrades. On entering the house, I found several of his pall bearers already with him, and the whisky circulating freely enough for such an early hour.

My fellow soldier was still in bed, and as his visitors had been plying him again with liquor, he was nearly stupid. They urged him to get out of bed, and held out a promise to send for the musical boy that had pleased him so much on the previous evening, which, at last, had the effect of making him get up; but it was needless for him to attempt to stand, as that was beyond his powers, so he was propped up in an old arm chair. Having fulfilled his part of the bargain, he demanded that they should keep to

theirs, and the boy was sent for, in whom I expected to meet some musical prodigy; but soon discovered that they had been amusing themselves at the expense of the old soldier. The boy was placed at the extreme end of the room from that in which was seated our glorious son of Mars, and putting his fingers to his mouth, the music commenced, which was that of a sweetly toned flute, when the soldier seemed astonished.

One of the party explained the matter to me.— After the party had got merry during the preceding evening, one of them was requested to play a tune upon his flute, and the soldier, who had got considerably in advance of the main body in his libations at the fountain of Bacchus, could not observe whence the music came, his eye not being steady enough to make a correct survey of the room. On gazing about to discover from what source the dulcet tones issued, he observed a boy at some distance from him, beating time on his chin, with his hand, when he at once pitched upon him as the musical magician, to the great amusement of all present. Seeing how he had imposed on his own senses, they kept up the joke, and the flute player was secreted more carefully, while the boy was brought further into view. He no sooner asked for a favourite air than the boy commenced to rap away upon his chin, and when the music ceased, he, of course, sat still. His remarks on this new species of music, occasioned a considerable deal of amusement; and it was again

repeated to him the following morning in my presence, and with most complete effect.

I called upon him the day after, and found him recovered from his excesses, with the exception of a headache, and we soon fell into an interesting chat, when he gave me a great deal of information regarding my old acquaintances, many of whom, I found, had been borne down

“ That awful gulf no mortal e'er repass'd.”

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER XLIX.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

AMONG the many sufferers from the effects of war, there is one class that, I have often thought, have a claim upon the bounty of their country, but who are generally found steeped in poverty and wretchedness—I mean the wives and children of soldiers. And it cannot but be regretted that some provision could not be made for them, and not leave them to eke out their existence from the hand of charity, which has too often to be resorted to, and ultimately destroys some of the noblest feelings of our nature. But I suppose the numbers that would be thrown on the bounty of the nation, is

the great barrier to such an arrangement never having been effected, still their state cannot but be a subject of deep regret; and if it were possible to provide, even in a scanty way for them, it is undoubtedly the duty of that country to do so, whose battles, their natural protectors, are fighting. It must be admitted that much has been done for their relief, by that true soldiers' friend, his late Royal Highness the Duke of York, particularly by the establishment of the military school at Chelsea; yet there is still much that could, and, in my humble opinion ought, to be done in their behalf.

I have often had occasion to reflect on this circumstance from the general state in which the women are found when the married men are compelled to leave their families behind them. One case, in particular, I cannot refrain from noticing, and which may stand as an example of thousands that occur in time of war.

Having promised to a poor fellow who died, in consequence of a wound he received at the taking of Java, that if ever I should return to Britain, I would make it my duty to see his wife and inform her of his fate; I, shortly after my return to Scotland, fulfilled my mission. She had lived in Edinburgh, but after much enquiry I ascertained that she had left that city and gone to Dalkeith. Taking the first opportunity I could, I went to see her, and found her residing about three miles from the town, with her sister, who was also a widow. She had three chil-

dren, two boys and a girl, and their appearance, with that of every thing around them, indicated their situation to be much better than I could possibly have anticipated.

After having informed her who I was, and my reason for travelling so far to see her and her family, she expressed great thankfulness for the pains I had taken to fulfil my promise, and made many enquiries regarding her departed husband, till at last her feelings so overcame her, that I almost regretted having paid the visit. When she recovered herself, I remarked that it afforded me much pleasure to see her in such comfortable circumstances. She told me that she had undergone much suffering while residing in Edinburgh, and that she had often to go and beg for her children, till one day she happened to meet a lady with whom her mother had been many years servant, who, after relieving her immediate wants, sent her and the children to the house where they now lived. Her eldest son was taken into the family as foot-boy, and though young, had given every satisfaction. The cottage and small piece of ground attached to it were allowed them rent free; and the factor on the estate, she told me, had desired them to apply to him at any time should they require assistance; but this they had not needed. The family, on whose estate they resided, as well as many others in the neighbourhood sent them work, by which means they were enabled to live, and keep the two younger children at school.

As evening approached I was preparing to return to Dalkeith, where I had intended to remain for the night, and so reach Edinburgh the next day; but they would not allow me to leave them, insisting that I should remain that night and the following day, which was the Sabbath. Finding it would gratify them I consented. After spending the evening in describing some of the countries of the East, and answering the various questions put to me, we retired to sleep. On the morning, I arose early and walked out into the fields, where all, except the voice of nature, was hushed—laborious man was at rest—and a peaceful quiet seemed to reign throughout the land. The dumb animals that assist him in his daily labours, were cropping the dasied mead, with a seeming consciousness of their day of rest having again arrived.

“ The blackbird’s note comes mellow from the dale;
 And sweeter from the sky the gladsome lark
 Warbles his heaven-tuned song; the lulling brook
 Murmurs more gently down the deep worn glen.”

A pleasing stillness prevailed around, which imperceptibly stole upon my mind, and prepared me to meet the devotions of the day with becoming feelings. How different, thought I, is this from the land in which I have been sojourning for many years, and was instinctively compelled to raise my eyes towards heaven, and in secret bless the Great Giver of all good, for my safe return to the land of my nativity.

Having approached the cottage, I lifted the latch and entered, when I found them awaiting me, and was introduced to a respectable looking old man, the gardener on the adjoining estate. An open bible was lying on a small table near the window, and from the chairs that were placed around it, I concluded that he had been reading to them a portion of the scriptures. Every thing appeared ready for the morning meal, but I observed the two sisters occasionally looking at each other, as if they had something to say, perceiving which, I arose, intending to retire, supposing my presence had interrupted them in their devotions; but I had scarcely reached the door when the old man stepped up to me and said, "that they were in the habit of making family worship, and if I had no objections to join with them they would feel happy." I replied, "nothing would gratify me more than doing so." We got seated, when a psalm was given out and sung, after which a portion of scripture was read, when we knelt down to address ourselves to the Most High God. A feeling of solemnity at this moment pervaded me, to which I had been too long a stranger; and my eye, resting on the two orphans that knelt at my side, I was borne back to a remembrance of my tender years, when, under the roof of a venerable father, I used, morning and evening, to assemble with the family, around the household altar. The recollection of these things—the innocent group by whom I was surrounded, and the affecting appeal of the good old man, in imploring

the protection of the Almighty in favour of this interesting family, all tended to encrease such a feeling.

“ God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb ;”

and the inmates of this humble cottage testified the truth of the saying. After breakfast I accompanied them to the parish church, a few miles distant, and returned in the afternoon. It was one of the loveliest evenings I had ever beheld. The sun had just set behind the distant mountains, but his departing rays still tinged the few clouds that floated around their summits. The shooting vegetation sent forth its sweet odours, while the music of the bubbling brook, and the song of the sweet tenants of the wood ever and anon broke pleasingly on the ear. A feeling of reflection insensibly crept on me, and the beautiful lines of the poet of the Sabbath were recalled to my memory :—

“ O Scotland! much I love thy tranquil dales ;
 But most on Sabbath eve, when low the sun
 Slants through the upland copse, 'tis my delight,
 Wandering, and stopping oft, to hear the song
 Of kindred praise arise from humble roofs.”

Early on the Monday morning I set out on my journey homeward, gratified at having fulfilled my promise to a departed friend, and in witnessing his bereaved family living happy and contented.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER L.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WHEN a Regiment embarks for a foreign station, only a limited number of the soldiers' wives are allowed to accompany their husbands beyond the place of embarkation, generally, in the proportion of ten women for every hundred men, and their fate is decided by drawing lots. When our draft was ordered off to the East Indies, I witnessed this unpleasant scene, and the various heart-rending incidents connected with it, are as fresh in my memory, as if they had just occurred. The day before we were to embark, all the women attended at the stated time, to have their lot determined, and a more melancholy assemblage I never witnessed. Hardly a word was spoken, and the voices that we had so often heard in playful banter, seemed almost afraid of their own sounds, while the deep drawn sigh would escape from its prison-house, to announce that the heart within was sad. The number of women present so greatly exceeded the number which the regulations permitted to go on board, that the chance of drawing an embarkation lot, was equal to one out of six, of course there would be five sorrowful hearts for every glad one, and with such a prospect, it is not to be

wondered at, that they should form so melancholy a group.

The slips of paper were folded up and put into the cap of the serjeant who was appointed to see them drawn. He remained standing with it in his hand for a minute or two before any of them had resolution to draw; at last one woman went forward, and putting her hand in, brought out a slip, and unfolded it, when, discovering her fate, she placed her hands upon her face, as if ashamed of her agitation, and retired to a corner of the room. One or two others having likewise drawn blanks, were quite overcome by their feelings; their husbands tried all they could to console them, but, poor fellows, in the very act of doing so, you could perceive that they were as much depressed as their disappointed wives. The next that stepped forward, procured a ticket for embarkation, which she no sooner discovered, than half frantic with joy, she flew into her husband's arms, at the same time throwing hers about his neck, exclaimed, "Oh! Peter, Peter," and burst into a flood of tears. The one who followed, was a young woman who had been married only six months previous, and as we all knew the fondness of the couple for each other, and their misery at the idea of a separation, every one who had no anxiety on his own account, felt desirous that her lot might be a lucky one. She had no sooner got hold of the slip of paper that contained her doom, than, as if aware of her fate, she became deadly pale, and her

whole frame shook, totally unable to unfold the paper; her husband stepping forward, took it from her hand, and after having examined it, cast a sorrowful look at her. It was enough—she gave a wild shriek, and fell senseless into his arms. I then went forward to their assistance, when we carried her into an adjoining apartment, and laid her on a bed; some of her companions in misfortune at that time entering, I withdrew from the scene altogether, in a very gloomy state of mind.

Next morning, being the last we were to remain on shore, was a very busy one, and all were actively occupied in preparing for embarkation. Reflecting on the events of the previous evening, I made some enquiries after the young wife, and was informed that she had spent a most miserable night. At times she seemed to have mustered resolution to bear her fate, but would again break out into fits of despair, and fears were entertained that she would ultimately lose her reason. Her husband remained with her, offering every consolation he could think of, and promising to lay past as much of his pay as he could, to enable him to send for her after his arrival in India; but the poor fellow was as miserable as herself, knowing too well the utter hopelessness of such a project. When the time of departure had arrived, he was obliged to steal away without any attempt to bid her farewell, fearing the effect it would have upon her. After we were on board, he got into very low

spirits, and shunned every one; and the evening before we sailed he went forward to the bow of the vessel and sprang over, in order that he might drown himself. One of the seamen observing the act, plunged in after him, and seizing hold of him, kept him afloat until a boat was lowered to their assistance, into which he was lifted, and again placed on board. He was taken below and strictly watched during the night, by order of the commanding officer, who sent for him next day and remonstrated with him upon the manner in which he had behaved on the preceding evening; and told him, that he would that day write to an officer who was to follow them in a few days, and, as he was taking his lady along with him, required a servant, when he would recommend his wife to them; so he might hope to see her in India as soon as himself. During the voyage he kept tolerably cheerful, conscious of the sincerity of his officer in the promise he gave him, and who was as good as his word, and did procure the young woman a passage by the proposed means, and singularly enough she arrived in India a fortnight before her husband. Their joyful reunion can be more easily conceived than described.

The women who were left behind, generally speaking, must have been in destitute circumstances, many of them having to travel several hundred miles before they could reach their homes (those who had any), and very few of them possessed more than a few

shillings,—some not even that. How they could manage I know not, except by obtaining assistance from common charity, as they proceeded on their journey. Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER LI.

“There’s a divinity that rules our fate.”

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOU have often heard the remark that “misfortunes never come single,” and this I found thoroughly borne out in my own case, on the day I was inspected at Chelsea, when my pension was awarded me.—That day I certainly suffered such a succession of mishaps, as would have unhinged the best tempered man alive; and I always look back to it, as a day on which I was doomed to be made wretched.

In the morning I got ready, as I considered, an hour before the time I was ordered to attend at Chelsea to pass examination, and as I thought it needless to appear sooner than the hour stated, I took up the newspaper and looked over it, until I considered my time for attendance had arrived; when, on looking at the clock, I found that I had

in the first instance mistaken the hour, and supposed it to have been only nine when it was actually ten, which was the time of muster. Knowing well the punctuality with which all military orders are expected to be kept, I hastened off without losing a moment more, and ran as if for a wager, when, on turning suddenly round a corner I came in full force against a Billingsgate fish-woman, calling sprats, of which she had a basket full on her head. Over she went on her back, and away went the sprats through the mud, of which there was plenty. I fell flat upon her, when she seized me by the collar and rolled me off the top of her into the mire, but still holding on like grim death, dealing out a volley of hearty curses upon me, until some persons standing near us, compelled her to let me go. She demanded five shillings for the basket of sprats that were strewed in the street, and some recompense for the dirty state I had put her in, as she was literally mud all over, and myself not much better. After a considerable deal of altercation, during which a large concourse of people had assembled around us, some of them enjoying themselves at our expense, calling us a brace of mud-larks, and many other names. I made a bargain for the damages, and she allowed me to depart, by paying three shillings. In the state I was in it was impossible for me to appear at the inspection, so I retired to a public house close by to get cleaned. In this process I was kindly assisted by a young man who had observed my misfortune

and accompanied me to the house; he helped me off with my coat, and while I was putting the rest of my garments in order, he took it outside the house to scrape the mud off. Whether he had done so or not I cannot say, for neither man nor coat ever made their appearance. It was only when I had got all the rest of my things set to rights and ready to start, that I began to have any dread of such a trick having been played me. The keeper of the house knew nothing of him, and supposed he was an acquaintance of mine, and having given him the loan of a knife to take the mud off my coat, and which he had likewise carried with him, made a demand upon me for its value, which he stated to be two shillings. There was no alternative but to pay it, so I just bore this second mishap the best way I could, and as it was now two hours beyond my time I set off again to attend the muster, minus my coat and five shillings. Just as I got to the gate I met a comrade who had come from his examination, who told me that I had not yet been called, and upon my mentioning to him my misfortune in losing my coat, he offered me the loan of his, to appear before the board. We then went to the nearest public house, where he stript off his coat, which I immediately put on and proceeded to the Hospital. In about an hour subsequent to my arrival, I was called in, and after a very short examination discharged with nine pence per day. I then returned to the public house where I had left my

comrade, and gave him back his coat, when he offered to accompany me to a slop shop to have myself refitted. On our way to the tailor's shop, I called in at the public house, to make enquiry after my lost garment, still hoping to hear something of it, but there was no appearance of the thief being found out, so we proceeded to procure another coat.

You may very naturally suppose that I had suffered sufficient misfortunes for one day at least. Not so,—my cup was not yet full. Having supplied myself with a coat, the tailor recommended me to take a pair of trowsers also, and offering them so low in price, I felt inclined to make a purchase of them, and retired to a back-room to fit them on. I had drawn off my old ones, and was about introducing my shanks into the new pair, when I heard footsteps descending a narrow staircase which entered the room at the opposite corner from that in which I had stationed myself, and supposing, from the sweet music that accompanied them, that some female was approaching, soon found myself in a dilemma—so spreading out my unmentionables to form a sort of battery screen for my person, I took a few paces backwards and entered a dark passage, which I had no sooner done than I made a sudden descent, and landed in the cellar. The noise of my fall, accompanied with some pitiful exclamations, caused the tailor and my comrade to come to my assistance, who again brought me to light. The damages I sustained,

in this affair amounted to a cut on the forehead, and a bruise on my right knee, which lamed me for some time. The man seemed very sorry for what had taken place, and as a recompense deducted a few shillings off the price of the trowsers; so after relating to him my former rencounter with the sprat woman, and its consequences, I left the shop, and having parted with my comrade, set off for my lodgings, in no pleasant humour from the fright I had got, and receiving two fresh wounds.

On my way home, sulky enough at the day's disasters, and trying to console myself with the prospect, now that I had procured my discharge, of returning to my native country, I was accosted by a wicked looking woman, who, collaring me, accused me of having ran off from my lodgings in debt to her sister, and also of carrying away some articles that belonged to another person who lived in the house. I could not stand this, so ordering her to let go her hold, and informing her of the mistake she had made, I attempted to shake her off, when her ladyship holloed out for assistance, and we soon had a mob surrounding us, when one of the police coming forward, she handed me over to him under a charge of theft and running off in debt to her sister. I walked peaceably on with the officer, and told him who I was, and that I had my discharge in my pocket, which had only been given me that day, when he expressed his belief of my statement, and advised me to respresent it at the office, and the affair

would soon be settled. When we arrived at the rendezvous, the woman stated her charge against me, when she was questioned by the magistrate, as to the time when I had been guilty of the crime she charged me with. "About twelve months ago," she replied. "Oh, then," said I, "here is something that will settle this affair," and taking out my papers, I handed them to him, which he looked over, and after some conversation with me regarding my servitude, told me he was quite satisfied that it was a mistake on the part of my accuser, whom, he informed me, was now in my power to punish. I did not wish to have any thing more to do with her, and as I expected to leave London in a day or two, told them, that for my part, she was welcome to go about her business. I again set off for my lodgings, not however, without some misgivings as to what might still intervene. Having reached them in safety, I related my adventures, and soon retired to rest, unhappy at a survey of the proceedings of this day of misery.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER LII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE often heard it said that when we feel oppressed with the vexations and cares of life, we should look around, and see what others are suffering, as a little observation would soon convince us that there are many who are much more unhappy than ourselves, and that we ought to be contented with our lot. This reasoning was forcibly impressed upon me the day after I had met with such a succession of annoying accidents, by hearing of the fate of a poor fellow who had passed through many a dangerous scene, fighting the battles of his country; and after returning to his native land covered with wounds, and procuring the retiring allowance for his services, was, at an unexpected moment carried off, before he had arrived at the home to which he had so long pined to return, and which prospect had cheered him through the dangers and fatigues of many years of hard servitude.

“ Dull grave—thou spoil’st the dance of youthful blood,
Strik’st out the dimple from the cheek of mirth,
And ev’ry smirking feature from the face;
Branding our laughter with the name of madness.”

Early on the morning which succeeded my day of catastrophies, I set off to Chelsea, anxious to learn how many of my old acquaintances had received their pensions, when I was informed of the melancholy end of one whom I had the day previous, seen in all the gaiety and vigour of life. He, with two others of our men who had passed, and had their pensions allotted them, determining to enjoy themselves for the rest of that day, proceeded to the Lambeth side of Westminster bridge, and procured a small boat, that they might take an aquatic excursion on the Thames, as far as Putney, a short distance up the river. They had spent some hours there, and on the approach of evening prepared to return; but not until they had indulged themselves rather too freely in the use of the gin bottle.

On their way down, their attention was arrested by a fire which had broken out in a house close to the river, a little above Westminster Bridge, when they proposed running the boat close to the shore to witness it. At the time this was agreed upon, two of them were seated working the oars, while the other was standing up near the stern, and the boat was instantly put about and rowed to the shore, when it was discovered that the man who had been standing in the stern had disappeared, and it was concluded that he must have fallen overboard. On nearing the bank of the river, the two men who were at the oars, kept their faces turned to the bow of the boat that they might avoid running foul of some

barges that lay near them, and it must have been while they were thus seated, that the unfortunate man had fallen over. They immediately retraced their way, and enquired of some boatmen who were in the neighbourhood, if they had observed any one struggling in the water, but none of them had perceived any thing of the kind. They continued hovering about the spot until after it became dark, and then returned with the boat, after which they proceeded to the hospital, and informed the officers of every thing connected with this melancholy affair. It was needless to have attempted recovering the body that night; but a party went to search the river next morning, when they found that some of the watermen had picked it up. The two men appeared before a magistrate, and made affidavit as to all the particulars of the case, admitting that they were all three partly intoxicated. One of them was in a very excited state of mind, and seemed as if he would have gone deranged. The other, who was more of a stoic, took it very coolly, and it was only from him that a correct account of the matter could be procured. The nervous agitation of the one, formed a striking contrast to the coolness of the other.

A Coroner's inquest was held, when it was satisfactorily ascertained by the examination of several witnesses from the public house at Putney, that they had no quarrel while there, and appeared exceedingly good friends. No marks of violence could be observed on the body of the deceased, and every

thing indicated that it was entirely accidental. Indeed no one acquainted with the parties could ever have attributed it to any thing but accident. The jury were unanimous in their verdict, which was—“Accidental death, by falling into the river from a boat, while in a state of intoxication.” From the account given by the witnesses from Putney, it appeared that they had drank very freely while there, and that the man who was drowned, on stepping into the boat when about to leave, nearly upset them all from his unsteadiness. The Coroner delivered a very appropriate admonition to the two men, and pointed out to all present, the awful consequences of drunkenness, which, whatever might be its effects afterwards made a deep impression at the time.—The keeper of the public house was also admonished for permitting them to get too much liquor, knowing, as he did, that they had to return by water, the consequences of which he now saw.

This poor fellow had served seventeen years, during which time he had fought in many a battle, and been several times wounded; and at last became disabled from the effects of a ball which shattered his right arm. He had been awarded a pension of one shilling and two-pence per day, and intended to return to Sutherlandshire, in Scotland, in a few days, to spend the remainder of his life amongst his friends, and enjoy his well earned pension. But, alas! what avails all our plans and arrangements in life.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER LIII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOU must have heard many instances of the reckless manner with which sailors spend their money when they get ashore. I believe soldiers are the class that most approximate to them in this prodigality of conduct; and I assure you I have witnessed so many instances of their want of management in money matters, as would prevent me from being sceptical of almost any story I could hear related regarding them. The savings of many years of hard service is often squandered in the course of a few days. They are a frank unsuspecting class of men, generally speaking, and so easily duped, that any designing knave can make them a prey for their duplicity.

One of the pensioners of the 59th who had saved a little of his pay, which, in addition to the advance of pension he received after passing his examination, made a sum sufficient to have enabled him to travel home in comfort, and support himself until he had it in his power to procure some employment; but unfortunately for him, an evening or two before he intended to leave London for his home, he adjourned to a public house without

any of his comrades being with him, and there met with some worthless scoundrels who no sooner discovered that he was in possession of a few pounds than they laid their plans to fleece him. After a good bouse, they proposed having a hand at cards, and the stakes offered to be played for, were so very trifling, that no suspicion could have been entertained of any intention of what could be termed gambling. They seemed very indifferent players, and the soldier was generally successful, which encouraged him the more readily to permit an increase in the amount to be played for. Still he continued to win, and he now began to look to the probability of retiring from the table with a considerable addition to his stock. A higher stake was again proposed, and still he, on the average, was the gainer, when a stranger, who had been smoking his pipe and looking carelessly on, offered to take any of them up at what he called something worth playing for, and placed twenty shillings before them. The unwary soldier took him up, and was the winner, when another for the same amount was played, which the pensioner also gained. The stranger then, cursing his bad luck, proposed increasing the stakes, and produced five pounds, challenging the pensioner to play him for that amount. He, being intoxicated with his previous success, and looking upon the other to be by no means his match, instantly accepted the challenge, and also tabled his money. They played, and to the great disappointment of the poor

pensioner, the stranger won. Another five pounds were staked by the stranger, and quickly covered by the other, who thought it impossible for him to lose a second time, but again he lost. A third stake was proposed and eagerly accepted by the pensioner, stung with disappointment, and in the mad hope of retrieving his previous losses, in which, however, he was disappointed. Thus stake succeeded stake, with the same success, until the poor fellow was left with only twenty shillings, and upwards of five hundred miles to travel before he could reach his home.

The result of this play convinced him of his folly, and he rose up from the table to return to his lodgings, when he was accused of cowardice, and persuaded to endeavour to regain his lost money. He informed them that he had only twenty shillings in the world, stating, the distance he required to travel, and if deprived of this small amount, he would be compelled to beg his way home. The depraved villains could not allow him to depart with even that sum, and by incessant persuasion, and application to the gin bottle, induced him at last to risk it. This finished his stock, when he returned to his companions with only a few pence in his pocket, in a dejected state of mind, conscious of his excessive folly.

He informed his comrades of the extent of his misfortunes, when some of them went along with him in search of the rascals, to endeavour to recover the poor fellow's money; but the landlord stated that he knew nothing of them, more than the soldier himself,

and asserted that he had never seen any of the parties previous to their having met in his house. This was a very unlikely circumstance, for according to the soldier's account, they appeared very familiar in the house, and that at the time he entered it, one of the party was sitting in a box drinking with the landlord, with whom he remained in conversation for some time after. There was no doubt, whatever, but that the landlord was accessory to this nefarious business; but the difficulty of proving it would have been so great as to render the possibility of conviction hopeless. The soldier admitted that after they commenced to play, he did not observe the landlord in the tap-room, and the boy who attended it, was the only person who entered, to supply them with the liquor ordered, which was always paid for when put down. It seemed evident from this, that the landlord, conscious of what was going on, wilfully kept out of the way, for fear of being implicated in the affair, and becoming liable to punishment for allowing gambling to be carried on in his premises. The party were so enraged, that they would have inflicted summary punishment on the public house keeper, had not one of them, foreseeing the evil consequences that would arise from such a course, persuaded them rather to complain to one of their officers, or to a magistrate, and by that means got them peaceably away.

The officer would have nothing to do with the affair, and this so disheartened them, as to the like-

lihood of procuring any satisfactory redress for their comrade, that they did not attempt to pursue the matter any further, and as a means of enabling him to reach his home, each contributed a small sum for that purpose; when he made arrangements to proceed on his journey, not in the best of spirits, but well satisfied with the good feeling displayed towards him by his fellow warriors.

Another unfortunate fellow entered one of the flash auction shops with which London abounds, and having a few pounds in his possession, was induced by some men who attend these places for the purpose of puffing up the goods and entrapping the unwary, to purchase various trinkets stated to be manufactured of the finest gold, and which they assured him would yield a large profit in the remote part of the country to which he was going. On his return he displayed to us his great bargains, when we soon discovered to what extent he had been cheated, and he was laughed at, or condoled with, according to the humour of his comrades, while they were busy inspecting his stock of trumpery. His money was all spent, and the trash he had obtained in lieu of it was of no use to him, neither could he ever expect to dispose of them at almost any price.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER LIV.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

As the smack Pilot, for Leith, in which I was to proceed to Scotland, was to sail with the morning tide, that served at five o'clock, I embarked the previous evening, along with some other pensioners for the same destination, with the intention of sleeping that night on board; but as much of the cargo was still to be taken in, and all was confusion, we adjourned to a public house to spend a few hours, until we could conveniently go on board.

After remaining there for some time, a number of persons, principally sailors, assembled to raffle a watch belonging to a poor widow, who had been left destitute. We also joined the company, and entered our names for a stake, and every one that came into the house during the evening, were entreated by the sailors to put down their shilling and take a throw of the dice, and there were very few that did not do so. This continued until about ten o'clock, when no more strangers appearing, the watch was awarded to the mate of a vessel lying in the river, who very generously gave it to a little boy, a son of the unfortunate widow.

A subscription was then made for a dance, and four-pence each subscribed to engage a fiddler who had been in attendance during the night, in expectation of a job. Tables, forms and all other obstacles were soon cleared away, and the disciple of Orpheus elevated in a corner of the room, a pair of regular Jacks then led forward their ladies, and commenced in grand style, to the "wind that shakes the barley." The room not being large enough to admit of more than two couples taking the floor at a time, one set succeeded another so rapidly, that the poor fiddler began to sing out for quarter, which was refused, and he was told that as he had been engaged for two hours, without any stipulation as to rests, he should either fulfil his agreement or depart without his money, which amounted to about seven or eight shillings. He remonstrated, but finding them determined, and not being inclined to forfeit the amount collected for him, stripped to his shirt and trowsers, and resumed his scraping, continuing to do so with little or no intermission until twelve o'clock, which terminated his engagement, and what from the heat, the crowded state of the room, and his constant employment, he was pretty much exhausted, as the streams of perspiration which burst from his little pimply face, fully testified.

As our musician was preparing to depart, his wife, a masculine looking woman, entered the room, and after a few questions, which she put to him in an under tone, but which we understood touched on

money matters, he begged our protection, stating, that his wife, was in the habit of taking all his cash from him; and that she was now making her usual demand for what he had earned during the evening. The woman, on her part, declared, that unless she looked after him she would never get a farthing; and they had a young family who depended principally on her for their support, as their father seldom returned home until he had squandered away every penny he received. The landlord of the house corroborated the woman's statement, giving her an excellent character, and but for whose exertions, he said, their children must have starved, or become the inmates of the work-house. He was ordered to deliver up his money; which was done with great reluctance, when he told us that we were no better than common robbers. This enraged the sailors so much that they determined to punish him, and being anxious to prolong the dance, they proposed, that, for the benefit of his family, they would employ him another hour, and that two-pence each should be collected for that purpose, from all present. He declared he would not play; but sailors are not to be trifled with, so the money was handed over to his wife, and he was desired to strike up his music. "Don't hesitate, my boy," said a jolly tar, "or look you here, you shall have a round dozen in a twinkling," at same time producing a firm piece of rope about two feet long, at sight of which the little man began to tremble, and offered to come to terms,

saying, that if he were allowed half the proceeds of this new engagement he would go on. "Play up," said Jack, "or blow me, you red-faced little nigger, I'll rub you down," and putting the violin into his hand, he held the rope ready to lay on. "Here it goes," cried the sailor, and taking a position to command the fiddler's back, told him it should be "once, twice, thrice." The little man evidently saw that things were getting serious; yet still it seemed doubtful from the sulky expression of his physiognomy if he would obey, until he heard the determined tone with which the sailor was dealing out the awful monosyllables that were to precede the torture, so just as Jack was about to repeat the fatal word, and suit the action to it, he drew his bow across the strings, and in an instant four pair of trotters were footing it to "Malbrook." With the rope suspended over him, he was compelled to work out the amount subscribed for his family, when he and his wife left us, not without a hearty curse on his part, which, however, was overcome by a vote of thanks and an elegant retiring curtsy from his lady.

We now left the party, and got on board the smack, which was ready to sail, and only waited the ebb of the tide, which would take place in a few hours.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER LV.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

SOLOMON tells us, “In the lips of him that hath understanding wisdom is found: but a rod is for the back of him that is void of understanding:” but two of our cabin passengers had not studied this moral lesson, or if so, had neglected its practical application, as what follows plainly demonstrates:

We set sail early in a beautiful morning in the month of August, and soon reached Gravesend. From this point our progress became very slow, the winds varying from calm to light breezes. There were about thirty passengers in all and as our voyage had every appearance of being a tedious one, Boreas having, seemingly, overlooked us in his orderly book, and as the calmness and beauty of the weather enabled us to keep on deck, various amusements were resorted to with the view of lessening its tedium. There were upwards of twenty cabin passengers, and in the steerage there were four old soldiers, (myself included) two young men, journeymen bakers, and though last, not least, as sonsie an auld wife as you would meet in a day’s march, who afforded us much entertainment, by her humorous description o’ Lunon, as she termed the great city: and our

amusement was much heightened by her stories being interlarded with a history of her daughter Jenny, whom she informed us had lately lain in o' a fine laddie wean, stating, with great satisfaction, "that it was as like its faether as it could glow'r, an' it had a red head, the very same as Saundie's," which, continued she, "I was real glad to observe—it corresponds, ye ken, an' sets aside a' manner o' doubts.—Na, man, but what d'ye think! Saundie has a kind o' a squint wi' his left ee, an' I declare the bit cratur's just got the self same. An' if ever it grows to to be a man it'll just be Saunders ouer again," and in this manner would she amuse us, with her various subjects of conversation, in which she displayed both humour and simplicity. But I must return to my text, and explain the proposition I set out with.

It was the general practice after dinner, for the passengers to assemble and have a dance upon the quarter deck, one of the young gentlemen being always ready with his flute, on which he played in admirable style, being thereby greatly instrumental in adding to the amusement of all on board.

In passing through Yarmouth Roads we were becalmed, and were accordingly, obliged to come to an anchor. In the evening, as usual, our revels commenced, and fun and frolic seemed to be the presiding genii on the deck of our trim built bark.

"But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flow'r, its bloom is shed."

The scene shifted,—and from harmless mirth, drunken riot followed. Two of the cabin passengers having indulged themselves rather freely at the flowing bowl, had either intentionally or otherwise, given offence to one of the ladies, who immediately complained to the captain, and went below to her cabin. The captain remonstrated with them upon the impropriety of their conduct, and took the chief offender to one side to reason with him in a friendly way, when he was saluted with a blow on the face, that brought him down flat upon the deck. The scene which followed looked serious enough, as two of the sailors seized hold of the person who struck their captain, and were about throwing him overboard, and it was with great difficulty they could be restrained from doing so, and at last were only prevailed on to desist, by the captain promising the men, that when they arrived at Leith he would hand over the unruly passenger to the proper authorities there. On hearing this, the two passengers broke out in a strain of abuse that was really abominable, and made use of such shameful epithets towards the ladies as I was surprised to hear from men possessing so much the appearance of gentlemen. The ladies all retired below, horror struck at their language, when a consultation was held on deck by the other gentlemen, to determine what punishment should be inflicted on the offenders. Had the result rested with the sailors, I have no doubt that their punishment would have been very summary in-

deed, but the matter was settled by the Captain ordering the boat to be lowered, and the luggage of the offending parties to be brought on deck, which was no sooner done, than he told them to step in, which they refused: he then desired his men to get some cord, with which they bound their ancles and wrists, and then caused them to be lifted into the boat. He then addressed them, stating, "that their conduct to him, bad as it was, would not have induced him to resort to such a mode of punishment, or probably any; but when he found the peace and comfort of those under his protection invaded by their outrageous conduct, and language made use of by them in the presence of ladies, that could only have been expected from the most degraded characters, and which certainly was most disgraceful to any who had the slightest pretensions to the character of gentlemen, he was imperatively called upon, as a matter of duty, to put them out of the vessel." He then gave the boat in charge of the mate, with instructions to land them and their luggage, and to take particular care that they sustained no bodily harm.

The boat proceeded to the land with its cargo, and the two passengers having been unbound were set ashore with their luggage. The mate received a message from them, to inform the Captain, that on their arrival in Scotland, they would apply to a court of justice against him for redress, on account of being seized and sent ashore, and that they would

make it one of the most serious matters for the Captain that he had probably ever met with. - This, I scarcely think they would attempt, as they must, upon reflection, have been aware that their conduct fully warranted the punishment, which was only too mild for their offence.

The remainder of the passage, which was rather tedious, passed off very pleasantly, and we continued to amuse ourselves in various ways, and the dancing was resumed in the evenings, without any further interruption.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER LVI.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

IN a previous letter I slightly alluded to the scanty provision made for soldiers' wives and their children, when not permitted to accompany their husbands to a foreign station; and I shall now take a cursory glance at the character and prospects of a British soldier, which, I trust, will be done in good feeling and impartially.

I have always been led to consider the profession of a soldier, as one of the most important in the civilized world. He is virtually the protector of the institu-

tions of his country, and, as can be proved in thousands of instances, their only dependence in the hour of danger. If the land is threatened by some merciless and ambitious tyrant, it is to the soldier that the inhabitants look for protection. If it is convulsed with internal commotion, and the laws disobeyed and violated, the soldier, as the last resource, steps forward to restore peace, punish the guilty, and protect the innocent; and with such important offices to perform, this profession has always been, and will continue to be looked upon, as one of the noblest fields for honourable ambition.

I know of no profession in which so many illustrious men have risen to eminence from comparatively an humble origin as that of the soldier. Bravery and talent lead them on step by step, till at last they reach the summit of the temple of fame. The discipline and equipment of the British army at the present day, are the admiration of all; and I am happy to add, that the comforts and improvements that have been introduced into the service since I belonged to it, are both numerous and important, holding out an inducement for a better class of men, than formerly, to embrace the profession.

That every laudable scheme should be attempted to improve their moral and intellectual character, is what no one will attempt to dispute; and, as my experience in the humble capacity in which I served, afforded me an opportunity both to witness and feel the effects of the great want on these points, I am

the more anxious to see them carefully cultivated; and the question that naturally suggests itself is—What should be done?

I am well aware that, in every scheme for the amelioration of the moral condition of the soldier, the great obstacle to be overcome is intemperance; neither am I a stranger to the difficulty attending the suppression of this evil, and feel also that it will be but gradual; still let the attempt be persevered in, and I have no doubt that it will ultimately prove successful in the great majority of cases. Let every reasonable indulgence be granted to the sober, steady soldier; while the drunkard must of course be punished. It is for his good, and it is requisite also for example. The two great causes of the prevalence of intemperance amongst soldiers, seem to me, to be the following. First—The too great facility of procuring liquors; and, second—the want of means for the proper improvement of their leisure time while in barracks. In regard to the first point, I think no one can doubt, that temptation is too much in the way of the soldier, when they consider that not only, in almost every instance, is the immediate neighbourhood of the barracks crowded with pot houses, but that even inside the walls temptations are thrown in their way by the permission of canteens. I have often thought the establishment of canteens had a very bad tendency on the habits of the men; independent of the temptation they must meet with from its convenience; and it seems strange, that they should be licensed

by the government, and a premium paid for the privilege of supplying the soldiers with an article which is equally detrimental to their health as it is subversive of all regularity of conduct. The farther such a temptation is removed, it were surely the better; as I believe it to be an admitted fact, that nine tenths of the punishments that take place in the army, arise from the use of intoxicating liquors, which undoubtedly tend to brutalize the character, inflame the passions, and destroy all prudent and economical habits. The effects of intemperance in civil life have been frequently pointed out, and are now well understood; and I assure you they operate in an equal, if not in a greater ratio in the military.— Having put the temptation of resorting to drink as much out of the soldier's way as possible, the next thing to be attended to, in my view of the matter, is to provide means for the profitable employment of his leisure hours. For this purpose I would refer generally, to the various improvements which have taken, and are continually taking place in the system of education and moral improvement in civil society, portions of which can undoubtedly be ingrafted successfully into the army; and there is one scheme which I understand has already been adopted with success in several regiments of the line, and which I yet hope to see universally adopted, I mean the introduction of libraries; by which means, through a careful selection of such books as blend information and instruction with amusement, the leisure of the

soldier may be most judiciously spent, and will have the effect of engendering steady habits, and teaching him to have a due respect for himself, as well as his superiors.

It is a common remark, though in my humble opinion, a very absurd one, that “the greatest black-guard makes the best soldier or sailor;” and it is generally thought that when a man becomes intolerable in civil society, from his bad conduct, that he is only fit for those professions. I would like to know how such opinions would hold good as applied to the officers who command them, and whether, if it is requisite that men of honor and education are selected for their commanders, some portion of the same qualities are not required for the commanded. Depend upon it, what is applicable to the one is also applicable, in a certain extent, to the other.

In time of war, the recruiting serjeant with his “soul-stirring drum” collects throughout the land a band of the most uncontrollable spirits the country can produce—individuals, who, generally speaking, either cannot or will not apply themselves to the peaceful avocations of life; and these restless souls, after being an annoyance to their friends and the community, are borne off to fight the battles of their country. The higher class of society procure commissions, while those from the humble walks of life fall into the ranks, and as many excellent soldiers are produced from this heterogeneous mass argues much in favor of the army as a school of reform.—

Many, however enter the army of a very different cast—men of virtuous dispositions and cultivated minds, who are often actuated by a thirst for romantic adventure and chivalrous distinction, and who certainly give an improved tone to its general character. Such men, when so fortunate as to distinguish themselves in the field or by their general good soldier-like conduct get advanced, are pointed out in society and act as a great incentive for such a class entering the lists; there is nothing that tends more to fire a man of respectability with military ardour, than hearing of those who have been fortunate in their career.

There are thousands of mechanics in Britain that would be much better in the army than employed as they are at their low rate of wages, who with poverty, disease, and the alms-house staring them in the face, spin out a life of wretchedness and toil, and too often sink into a premature grave from the close confinement to which they are subject and the poor fare they have to subsist upon; and I have no doubt the better behaved of them would feel more inclined to become soldiers were greater attention paid to improve their general character. Much has been done in this respect since I can recollect, but there is still an ample field for further exertion.

The food and clothing of the soldier is generally much better than the mechanics I allude to can procure, and the barracks are far more comfortable than any of the small, unwholesome apart-

ments into which they are huddled, and cleanliness, which is a part of a soldier's duty, is as carefully looked after in the barracks as on the parade, and they are thereby protected from various diseases that are engendered in the habitations of the working classes in the manufacturing districts of Great Britain.

When the soldier is sick, he has the attendance of the medical officers belonging to the service, and a comfortable clean hospital to reside in; and when the time of his servitude is over and the infirmities of life have crept upon him a pension is allowed him, which, though small, may do much towards protecting him in his old age from the evils with which poverty visits the worn-out mechanic.

The pay of the army is allowed by those capable of judging, to be too low, and in comparison with the civil service, it is very obvious; but I suppose the immense numbers required for the service, has caused such a severe scrutiny to be made on the heavy expense to the nation, that it has been pared down to the least possible amount.

I have always preferred going upon foreign service, for various reasons,—two of which are, that a soldier is more respected abroad than at home, and generally finds himself better provided for. In India, especially, this is the case.

When a soldier first arrives in India, and I believe it is the same in all hot countries, he finds his health in a very bad state. This I think is in a great mea-

sure caused by the sudden change in the food, from salt provisions which they receive on the voyage out, to fresh provisions which are supplied to them immediately upon their arrival, and to the practice of having parades in the morning before the dispersion of the dews. I consider that the health of the soldiers would be greatly improved were fresh provisions only gradually had recourse to and morning parades dispensed with.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER LVII.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

HAVING now related to you many of the sketches and anecdotes, which my service in the army had supplied me with, I shall now resume my narrative and bring it to a close.

Upon my return to Edinburgh my first object was to find out my wife and family, whom I had left there, when I went to India to join my Regiment. I had no difficulty to encounter in my search, as I found her in the same house I left her in seven years before. Our reunion, after so long a separation, was gratifying

to us both; and although poor in worldly circumstances we consoled ourselves with the hope that better times awaited us, and the prospect of never again separating for any length of time on this side the grave. Many were our mutual inquiries as to what had happened during our separation, and I was under the necessity of "fighting my battles o'er again" for her satisfaction. In answer to my interrogatories, she told me that she had had many a hard struggle during my absence; but, as she had been blessed with good health, was enabled to maintain herself and family, and keep a roof above their heads, by the exercise of her needle. I found, also that death had been busy amongst my friends and acquaintances, and amongst others my mother, mother-in-law and youngest son had become the victims of the relentless tyrant.

About a month after my return, I received from my agent an order for the sum of five pounds, being an allowance granted me in consideration of my wounds. Eighteen months thereafter, I received from him an order for nine pounds, less agency fees, being the first instalment of prize money; and two years subsequently, a second instalment of five pounds, also less agency fees. A third instalment was long promised but I never received it; and ultimately I was given to understand that there would be no further sum paid on that account. Thus, these two sums—nine pounds and five pounds—were all that was allowed as prize money for the taking of

Java, although before leaving the Island we had been informed that the share of each private was twenty-five pounds. I was never able to learn the cause of this shortcoming in our prize money.

In the year 1817, a gentleman of the name of Kinloch, a native of Scotland, left the sum of one million, sterling, to certain trustees, with directions that the interest of that sum should be appropriated to the relief of wounded soldiers and sailors of Scotch extraction whose pensions did not amount to one shilling per day. Being of the number of those pointed out as entitled to relief from the Kinloch bequest, I made application, and received an answer, stating that my name had been put upon the list; but as only five hundred could receive allowances from the fund at one time, I could not for the present reap any advantage, but as vacancies occurred, I should in my turn be put upon the pay list, and if I changed my place of residence, I was to intimate the same to the secretary. I have never reaped any benefit from this application; and although upon my leaving Scotland I intimated my intention to the secretary, and have, since my arrival in this country, addressed two letters to him, I have as yet received no answer.

From the period of my return from India until I embarked for Canada, I continued to reside in Edinburgh, working at my trade. Business had got very bad; many men were entirely out of work, and almost in a state of destitution, and others with only such

partial employment as allowed them but a very scanty subsistence. Although I did not get very constant employment, I durst not open my mouth to any of my fellow workmen in the way of complaint, for if I did so, I was sure to be told I had no right to complain, as I had a pension of nine pence per day, besides my work to depend upon. This was no doubt true; and although it was but a very small dependence, yet it might have been of very great service to me, had I not rendered its smallness still smaller by my folly. Like too many old soldiers, I was at this time not very famous for temperance, and was very apt at pension time to get into the company of some thirsty souls like myself, and in their society dissipate in a useless manner a portion of that money which should have been applied to the support of my family. I did not, however, carry my folly to the extent that some of my fellow pensioners did, who were wont to continue their course of drinking until nothing of the pension remained, for I generally managed to take the greater part of my money to my family; still, however, I would have shown more sense and discretion if I had totally abstained from drink.

About the beginning of the year 1832, I observed in the newspapers a notice from Government to Pensioners, stating that they might have their pensions commuted, receiving in lieu thereof four years' purchase, and a grant of land either in Australia or in any of the North American Colonies.—

At the time this notice met my eye, business was far from being brisk, and I thought it might be for my advantage to embrace the offered opportunity. As Canada was more accessible for small means than Australia, that was the point towards which I thought of steering my course; but as I was in total ignorance of the nature of the country, my first object was to obtain information on that point. I therefore procured some of the many works then published treating of the Canadas, and the descriptions which they contained greatly increased my desire to go there, and ultimately determined me to commute my pension and take up my residence in Canada. Accordingly, I entered into the transaction with Government and received the sum of thirty pounds down, the remaining part to be paid upon my arrival in Quebec. I then engaged a passage for myself and family on board the Chieftain, Barque, then lying in Leith docks, taking in passengers for Canada; and in the month of June, 1832, I once more set sail from the shores of my native country.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER LVIII.

HAVING set sail we skirted the eastern coast of Scotland, passed through the Pentland Firth, and proceeded to traverse the mighty Atlantic towards the point of our destination; and after a passage of six weeks, from the time we left our native land, we cast anchor at the quarantine station at Grosse Isle, where we were detained for two days, and then permitted to proceed to Quebec. I shall not attempt a delineation of the effect which the first appearance of that city has upon the beholder; suffice it to say, that I was much astonished and delighted with it. After being visited by the health officer we received permission to land. At this time that terrible scourge, the cholera, was raging with the utmost virulence, and business of every kind seemed to be in a state of stagnation.

As it was not my intention to remain at Quebec, I took a cursory glance at a few of the most remarkable features about it, such as the fortifications, the plains of Abraham, the citadel, &c. Having satisfied my curiosity as well as I could during the short time I had to spare, I took my papers and went to the proper quarter, and drew the remaining part

of my commutation money, and procured my location ticket. As the evening was pretty well advanced I returned to the wharf to take a passage on board of one of the steam boats, for myself and family, for Montreal. While on the wharf I was a witness to a melancholy accident. A number of emigrants who had come passengers in a vessel which left Leith at the same time we did, and had arrived in port only a few hours before us, were collected together. Two of them appeared to be quarreling and the others were attempting to quiet them. While this was going on, one of the two, either through accident or design, struck another of the party, whose passion was thereby roused and immediately put himself into a fighting attitude, he stepped back to avoid the attempts that were made by his comrades to restrain him, when unfortunately he missed his footing and fell over the wharf into the river, and was no more seen alive. The body was not found until next day, when it was discovered within a short distance of the place where the accident occurred. The following particulars regarding the man and his family, I learned partly at the time and partly at an after period, from one of his fellow passengers. He was a married man, with a wife and family of four children, who were entirely dependant upon his exertions for their support, and were by his sudden and melancholy death left entirely destitute. As it was the wish of the widow to return to Scotland, a subscription was entered into by her fellow

passengers and a few charitable individuals in Quebec who became cognizant of the affair. A sum was raised sufficient to have taken her home, and the time had nearly arrived, when she was to embark, when the poor widow was seized with cholera, and carried off after a few hours' illness, leaving a family of helpless orphans. The same charitable individuals who stepped forward on the first occasion, again exerted themselves, and the children were well provided for.

After having arrived at Montreal, we found considerable difficulty in procuring a place to shelter ourselves in; and as we were all more or less indisposed, and not in a condition for travelling farther, we determined to remain where we were for some time and endeavour to get employment at our respective trades. It was, however, a considerable time before we were sufficiently recovered to enable us to look out for employment, and my money had now dwindled down to a very small sum. On this account, after my eldest son and myself had procured work, we resolved not to leave Montreal that season, but wait until the ensuing, when I would proceed by myself to my location and examine its capabilities, and if I found it would answer, I would thereafter transport my family thither.

Before proceeding farther, I beg here to offer a few remarks upon the subject of the commutation of pensions which has been suggested by my own experience.

Old soldiers are proverbial grumblers, but I will not, at the present time, stop to enquire whether or not the character is deserved, I only hope that the following observations, will not prove the truth of the adage.

The scheme of commuting pensions has turned out to be fraught with misery and wretchedness to the old soldier. My experience now teaches me that the *materiel* of the old soldier rendered it impossible for any other result to follow such a scheme. While serving in the army, which in most cases constitute a considerable portion of the man's life, he has had no care in providing for his own wants, every thing being found for him; he has, therefore, no thought of tomorrow, and to the provident care of money he is a total stranger. The natural consequence of all this is, that any considerable amount of money coming into his possession is squandered away as if it were never to have an end. This was strongly exemplified in the case of the commuted pensioners. The portion of the money paid to them in Britain was mostly expended in paying their passage and making the necessary outfit for the voyage. Upon their arrival in Quebec they received the remaining part along with a ticket for the grant of land allowed them by Government.—Some were prevented by disease from proceeding farther; many delayed setting out from day to day, until their means became exhausted when they were unable to reach their destination; while others commenced a scene of riotous living which lasted until

all their money was expended, and themselves brought to the verge of the grave. It is thus seen that few, ever reached or took possession of the land allotted them.

In my next letter I shall endeavour to show, that even had they proceeded directly and taken possession of their lots, a great many of them would have been nothing benefited thereby.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

LETTER LIX.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

IN my last, I stated that even supposing the pensioners had proceeded without delay to their allotted farms, very few of them would have bettered their condition. This, I think, can scarcely be denied, when the following facts are taken into consideration. Few of them had ever been accustomed to agricultural pursuits, or knew anything at all about the nature of the soil, which rendered them totally incapable of managing or cultivating a farm; and, it must also be remembered, that they were all more or less disabled by wounds, and not a few of them had descended far into the vale of years, and therefore ill qualified to sustain the necessary labour upon a

cleared farm, much less to undergo the fatigue and privations consequent upon reclaiming the wilderness of woods, in which their lands were located. Upon the whole, the transaction has been a most unfortunate and a very losing one for the poor pensioners; and it is deeply to be regretted that Government ever put such a temptation in their way, and induced them to give up an income which would have proved a source of comfort to them when unable longer to work for their living; and that too for such an inadequate compensation. I cannot leave this subject without expressing a hope, that were the matter properly represented, Government would yet be induced to restore the few survivors of the commuted pensioners once more to the pension list. In doing so Government would be no losers, as six years have now nearly elapsed since the transaction was entered into, so that both principal and interest of the advance must have been by this time repaid; and the lands I believe, are in almost every case unsettled upon and in their original state.

Agreeably to the resolution I expressed in my last letter, I continued to reside in Montreal, working at my trade for the support of myself and family, and although I came to the city a total stranger, and unacquainted with any individual residing in it, yet I was fortunate enough, in a very short time, to procure sufficient employment to enable me to maintain them comfortably.

The season after my arrival in Canada, I de-

terminated to take a trip and visit the part of the country in which my land was located, with the intention, if upon inspection I found it suitable for me, to settle myself there and remove my family from Montreal. The land allotted me was in a back concession of the Township of Wentworth, situated upon the Ottawa river. Having made up my mind to take the excursion, I embarked on board a steamboat at Lachine, and in due time was landed at Carillon, from whence I proceeded on foot to view my intended place of abode. A very cursory glance at the situation served to convince me of the impracticability of my scheme of settling there, the lot was literally a wilderness without a human habitation near it. It would indeed have been the height of folly in me, unaccustomed as I had long been with country work, being disabled from wounds, and somewhat past the prime of life, to have taken up my residence in such a situation. I, therefore, came to the conclusion to return to Montreal, and discard from my mind the idea of deriving any benefit from my land. I retraced my steps to Carrillon and once more embarked on board the steamboat on my way back.—The then Governor General, Lord Aylmer was, with his suite, on board the same boat, and he observing me to have the appearance of an old soldier put the question to me, if I had not served in the army. I answered his Lordship in the affirmative, and that I had received a pension; but commuted it and was just returning from examining my lot of land, from

which I found that I could derive no benefit whatever. His Lordship told me that I had acted a very foolish part in commuting my pension, and observed, that it was unfortunate that it had ever been put into the power of pensioners to do so, and said that he would use all his influence to have the few remaining commuted pensioners restored to their former situation.

I returned to Montreal, and have continued to reside there until the present time. At the breaking out of the disturbances last Fall, I again took up arms in defence of my country, and joined Lieut.-Colonel Maitland's Battalion of Volunteers, in which I am a serjeant, and have been employed during the winter in assisting to drill one of the companies.

Yours, &c.

THE COMMUTED PENSIONER.

1870

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A P P E N D I X.

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INDIA.

“INDIA forms unquestionably one of the most remarkable regions that exist on the surface of the globe. The varied grandeur of its scenery, with the rich and copious productions of its soil, are not equalled in any other country. It is also extremely probable, that it was, if not the first, at least one of the earliest seats of civilization, laws, arts, and of all the improvements of social life. These, it is true, have at no period attained to the same pitch of advancement as among Europeans; but they have, nevertheless, been developed in very original and peculiar forms, displaying human nature under the most striking and singular aspects.

“The strong interest which India in itself is thus calculated to excite, must to us be greatly heightened by the consideration of its having become so completely a province of the British empire. The government of Great Britain now directs the fortunes of a hundred millions of people placed at the opposite extremity of the globe; and hence the well-being of the state is intimately suspended on that of this vast dependency. The connexion, too, is peculiarly

strengthened by the great number of British subjects who are constantly going out to administer the affairs of that important colony. Closer personal ties, in many instances, are thereby formed with our eastern settlements than with the different provinces of Britain itself.

“India is enclosed by very grand natural boundaries.—Its whole northern frontier is separated from the high table-land of Thibet by the chain of the Himmaleh Mountains, which, by recent observation, appears to reach at least as great a height as any other ridge by which the globe is traversed. The western and eastern limits are formed by the lower course of two great rivers,—the Indus on one side, and the Brahmapoutra on the other. The southern portion consists of a very extensive peninsula surrounded by the Ocean. Within these limits, we shall find a religion, languages, manners, and institutions, characteristic of this region, and distinguishing it from all the other countries of Asia.

“India, thus defined, though some of its extremities have not been very precisely determined, may be described generally as lying between the 8th and 34th degrees of north latitude, and the 68th and 92d of east longitude.—It thus extends somewhat above 1800 miles from north to south, and at its greatest breadth nearly 1500 from east to west.

“India is, as it were, an epitome of the whole earth. It has regions that bask beneath the brightest rays of a tropical sun, and others, than which the most awful depths of the Polar world are not more dreary. The varying degrees of elevation produce here the same changes that arise elsewhere from the greatest difference of position on the earth’s surface. Its vast plains present the double harvests, the luxuriant foliage, and even the burning deserts.

of the torrid zone; the lower heights are enriched by the fruits and grains of the temperate climates; the upper steeps are clothed with the vast pine forests of the north; while the highest pinnacles are buried beneath the perpetual snows of the Arctic zone. We do not in India, as in Africa and the Polar Regions, see nature under one uniform aspect; we have to trace her gradual, yet rapid transitions, between the most opposite extremes that can exist on the surface of the same planet.

“The main body, as it were, of India, the chief scene of her matchless fertility, and the seat of her great empires, is composed of a plain extending along its entire breadth from east to west, between the Brahmapoutra and the Indus; and reaching across from the great chain of mountains to the high table-land of the Southern Peninsula. It may thus possess a length of 1500 miles, with an average breadth of from 300 to 400. The line of direction is generally from south-east to north-west, following that of the vast mountain-range which bounds it on the north, and from whose copious streams its fruitfulness is derived.—With the exception, perhaps, of the country watered by the great river of China, it may be considered the finest and most fertile on the face of the earth.

“Of this general character of the Indian plain, the province of Bengal presents the most complete and striking example. Its wide surface is not diversified with a rock, or even a hillock. The Ganges pours through it a continually widening stream, which, during the rainy season, covers a great extent with its fertilizing inundation. From this deep, rich, well-watered soil, the sun, beating with direct and intense rays, calls forth an almost unrivalled power of vegetation, and makes it one entire field of waving grain. Bahar, higher up the current, has the same

general aspect, though its surface is varied by some slight elevations; but Allahabad, higher still, is mostly low, warm, and fruitful, exactly like Bengal. North of the river the provinces of Oude and Rohilcund, sloping gradually upwards to the mountains, enjoy a more cool and salubrious climate, and display in profusion the most valuable products, both of Asia and Europe. Here the valley of the Ganges terminates, and is succeeded by that of the Jumna, more elevated, and neither so well watered nor quite so fertile. The Doab, or territory between the two rivers, cannot be made very productive without artificial irrigation.

“In spite, however, of every human effort, some tracts are left uncultivated in consequence of political disorder and misrule; while, in others, nature, under the combined influence of moisture and heat, makes efforts so powerful as to baffle all attempts to modify or control them. She then riots in unbounded luxuriance, and covers large tracts with that dense, dark, impenetrable mass of foliage and vegetation, crowded and twined together, which is called *jungle*, and which opposes an almost impassable barrier even to an army. Trees spreading on every side their gigantic arms,—thorny and prickly shrubs of every size and shape,—canes shooting in a few months to the height of sixty feet,—compose the chief materials of those close natural palisades. Even in the open plain, the banian and other single trees, when full scope is given to their growth, spread out into the dimensions of a considerable forest.

“From the cultivated regions the various classes of wild beasts are excluded with the utmost solicitude. Even the domestic species are not reared in great numbers, nor to any remarkable size or strength. There is a small cow with a hump, fit only for draught, but which the Hindoo

regards as a sacred object. Light active steeds are bred by the natives for predatory excursions; while for regular military service the large and strong Turkish horse is preferred. But, on the other hand, the wooded tracts, where nature revels uncontrolled, are filled with huge and destructive animals. The two most remarkable quadrupeds are the elephant and the tiger. These two mighty animals are brought into conflict in the Indian hunts. The elephant is then used as an instrument for attacking his fiercer but less vigorous rival. The hunter, well armed, is seated on the back of this huge animal; and, in the first advance, the whole body of the assailants are ranged in a line. When the combat commences, the elephant endeavours either to tread down the tiger with his hoof, crushing him with the whole weight of his immense body, or he assails him with his long and powerful tusks. Whenever either of these movements can be fully accomplished, the effect is irresistible; but the tiger, by his agility, and especially by his rapid spring resembling the flight of an arrow, often succeeds in fastening upon the legs and sides of his unwieldy adversary, and inflicts deep wounds while the latter is unable either to resist or to retaliate. Even the rider, notwithstanding his elevated seat and the use of arms, is not on such occasions wholly exempt from danger.

“Immediately westward of the Junna, the general level of the country attains a point of elevation, whence it descends on both sides; and all the rivers, flowing from the high mountain-range, roll either eastward and become tributary to the Ganges, or westward to pour their waters into the Indus. Between these two rivers and their respective branches there intervenes a considerable space, which is refreshed only by a few small rivulets that spring up and disappear amid the waste. Thus is formed a

desert, of extent sufficient to compose a mighty kingdom, and occupying the whole breadth in that direction, from the mountains to the ocean. This entire region, about 600 miles long and 300 broad, presents an aspect nearly similar to the most dreary tracts of Arabia and Africa. According to the observations of Mr Elphinston, who crossed it in his way to Cabul, the eastern division consists of sand heaped often into hills of surprising elevation, and so loose that, whenever the horses quitted the path hardened by beating, they sunk above the knee. Over this wilderness, however, is scattered some coarse grass, with stunted and prickly shrubs ; while in the midst of the sand there grow large water-melons, affording the most delicious refreshment to the thirsty traveller. At wide intervals are found villages, or rather clusters of mud huts, round which are reared crops of coarse grain and pulse, whose stalks, like shrubs, stand distinctly separate from each other. Yet a considerable population must be sprinkled over this immense desert, since Bikaneer, in its centre, presents, though on a small scale, the aspect of a city adorned with palaces, temples, and other spacious edifices. Westward of that town the soil is generally a hard clay, variegated only by mounds of sand. Poogul, a village of straw huts, defended by a ruinous mud fort, encompassed with naked hills, and amid a sea of sand without a trace of vegetation, appeared a spot so desolate that it seemed astonishing how any human beings could make it their abode. On the more smooth and level portions of this dreary tract the traveller is tantalized by the phenomenon of *mirage*, producing before him the appearance of immense lakes that even reflect the surrounding objects; and the illusion continues till he has almost touched the watery semblance, and finds it to consist of the same arid soil as the rest of the

desert. North of this great plain of India, and along its whole extent, towers the mountain-region of the Himmaleh, ascending gradually till it terminates in a long range of summits wrapped in perpetual snow.

“The Himmaleh range, where it touches on the campaign country, is almost every where girt with a peculiar belt or border, called the Tarryani. This term is applied to a plain about twenty miles broad, upon which the waters from the higher regions are poured down in such profusion that the river-beds are unable to contain them. They accordingly overflow, and convert the ground into a species of swamp, which, acted on by the burning rays of a tropical sun, throws up an excessively rank vegetation, whereby the earth is choked rather than covered. The soil is concealed beneath a mass of dark and dismal foliage, while long grass and prickly shrubs shoot up so dense and so close as to form an almost impenetrable barrier. It is still more awfully guarded by the pestilential vapours exhaling from those dark recesses, which make it, at certain seasons, a region of death. Hence the destruction which overtakes an army that encamps for any length of time near this fatal valley,—an effect fatally experienced by the British detachments which were stationed on the frontiers of Bootan and Nepoul. Beneath these gloomy shades, too, the elephant, the tiger, and other wild animals, prowl unmolested; while the few human beings who occupy the vicinity present a meagre, dwarfish, and most sickly aspect.

In emerging from this dark and pestilential plain, and beginning to ascend the lower mountain-stages, a much more pleasing scene opens to the view. The observer passes through smiling and fruitful valleys, overhung by romantic steeps, and covered to a great extent with the noblest forests. Amongst which are various species of

the more hardy oak and the pine, beside trees possessing rich juices and aromatic odours not found among the lower woods; as, that mimosa, the fluid extracted from which yields the medical substance called catechu, and a species of cinnamon or rather cassia, the virtue of which resides in its root. The views obtained from commanding points in these regions, consisting in a foreground of smiling and cultured vales, hills behind crowned with natural plantations, steeper and loftier ranges beyond, and in the distance the snow-clad pinnacles of the highest mountain-chain, form a combination of the most sublime and enchanting scenery.

“The Himmaleh, as it ascends above the picturesque regions which diversify its lower border, assumes a much bolder and severer aspect. The lofty ridge, the deep valley the dashing torrent, produce a resemblance to the most elevated portions of our own central Highlands. A laborious task is imposed on the traveller, who has successively to mount and descend this series of lofty terraces, along rough and narrow paths that often skirt the most tremendous precipices. The expedients, too, provided for the passage of the rivers which dash through these gloomy hollows, are of the most slender and imperfect descriptions. Two planks fastened to the point of opposite cliffs, called a *sanga* or *sankha*, are, in many cases, considered amply sufficient; others, called *jhulas*, are formed by ropes stretched across, making a species of loose parapet, and supporting a light ladder for the feet to rest upon. Mr Webb met with an instance where there were merely stretched from bank to bank two or three ropes, round which the passenger was expected to coil himself, and work his way across, having a hoop for the back to rest upon; those who could not effect this movement were pulled across by a cord.

“In consequence of this peculiar structure, these loftier regions of the Himmaleh do not present that tranquil grandeur, and those picturesque views, which render the mountain-scenery of Europe so enchanting. They are rugged, gloomy, and monotonous. The mighty summits overhang no soft pastoral valleys, nor wave with varied foliage, nor are reflected in the bosom of still and transparent lakes. The traveller, hemmed in between their steep precipices, sees only the dark grandeur of the chasm through which he winds. Sometimes, however, on reaching a high pinnacle, he finds himself in possession of a prospect bearing a character of the most awful sublimity. A spot, raised almost to an immeasurable height above the plain beneath, proves only the base, whence seven or eight successive ranges tower towards heaven, and terminate at length in a line of snowy pinnacles.

“From causes that seem somewhat mysterious, the southern slopes of these mountains are generally smooth and rather naked, while the northern faces are shattered and rocky, yet covered with vast masses of hanging wood. Amid these wilds, tall and majestic forests of pine, larch, spruce, and silver fir, sometimes even of cypress and cedar, grow, flourish, and decay, useless and unappropriated. There are no means of conveying the timber to any spot where it can be subservient to human use or ornament. With these trees are intermingled numerous bushes loaded with the fruit which forms the luxury of the northern regions of Europe; gooseberry, raspberry, strawberry, all unknown to the plains below. In sheltered and favourable spots, the wild rose, the lily of the valley, cowslip, dandelion, and various other flowers, are seen bursting through the green carpet. The trees and rocks in the higher districts are richly clothed with moss and lichen, the vegeta-

tion of the countries bordering on the Arctic Circle; a lichen has even been observed resembling that which flourishes in Iceland, and which is imported for medicinal purposes under the name of Iceland moss.

“The animal world in this higher region undergoes a change equally striking. The elephant and tiger, the kings of the forests beneath, disappear, or are very seldom seen. Cattle and horses do not find a sufficient extent of level pasture; and hence sheep and goats are the animals chiefly reared for uses of domestic life. Depredations are chiefly committed by the wild cat, the bear, and the hog. The chamois bounds from rock to rock, and the forests are filled with deer of various species; of which the most rare and precious is that producing the musk. It is found only in the most lofty and inaccessible heights, amid rocks and forests which the human foot scarcely dares to tread. The most intense cold is so essential to its life, that the young, on being brought down to a warm situation, uniformly perish in a few days. The forests in all the more moderate heights are filled with flocks of such fowls as are elsewhere domesticated, here running about wild, tempting the pursuit of the sportsman; but, as they very seldom take wing, they are with difficulty reached by the gun. The peacock displays his glittering plumage only on the lower hills. The sovereign eagle is seldom descried amid the cliffs, which are inhabited by kites, hawks, and others of the minor predatory birds. Partridges and pheasants are numerous and of various species; the latter are even seen flying amid the snows at a great elevation. Bees swarm in all the lower districts, making their hives in the hollows of trees; these the natives plunder by merely raising a loud noise, which causes the swarm to issue forth and leave the honey unprotected. A late traveller has enabled us

to form some idea of the leading features which distinguish the valleys of the Sutledge, the Pabur, the Jumna, and the Bagiruttee, or principal head of the Ganges.

“The glen of the Sutledge is little more than a profound and gloomy chasm, naked and precipitous, without the romantic beauty produced by swelling banks or fringing wood. The Pabur, a tributary of the Jumna, presents a pleasing variety compared to this or to any other ravine of the Himmaleh. It rolls through a vale of moderate breadth; its banks and the slopes above are beautifully studded with fields, woods, and villages; while brown hills, tipped with rocks and snow, tower in the background.—The Jumna, again, has its borders generally bold, savage, and impracticable; all its higher tracts, too, consist of mighty rocks and precipices buried under huge masses of snow. Yet the lower grounds are wooded; and along the river are seen some green narrow vales, rising into slopes covered with cultivation and verdure, which diversify even its wildest scenes with a mixture of softness and elegance.—The banks of the Bagiruttee, a broader stream, which has worn a still deeper bed through the mountain-strata, are beyond all others repulsive, and equally destitute of beauty and life. These solitary steeps are only scantily clothed with the foliage of the sombre fir; the cliffs, shattered and splintered, are not even tinted with moss or lichen, but, bearing the dusky colours of their natural fracture, shoot up on every side into pinnacles of amazing height. But, notwithstanding the gloomy and uninviting aspect of these mountain-scenes, there are a few places in which they open out into smiling and cultivated plains of considerable extent.

“Beyond a succession of lofty eminences is seen towering, amid perpetual snows, the central mass of this enor-

mous chain of mountains. It has been estimated to extend more than a thousand miles in length, and about eighty in breadth, forming one continuous desert of precipices, rocks, and ice. In a few places only, a precarious track is formed by the Alpine torrent, dashing in an unbroken sheet of foam, through dark ravines, bordered by precipitous mountain-walls ascending above the clouds. Down the perpendicular faces of these stupendous avenues there rain almost continual showers of stony fragments, broken off and descending in ruins from the cliffs above. Sometimes large portions of rock are detached, and roll down in heaps, effacing every path which has been formed beneath, filling the beds of the rivers, and converting them into cataracts. The whole side of a mountain has been seen thus parted, and spread in fragments at its feet. Trees torn up and precipitated into the abyss, lie stretched with their branches on the earth, and their roots turned up to the sky. Yet through these tremendous passes, and across all these mighty obstructions, the daring industry of mortals has contrived to form tracks, narrow indeed, as well as fearful and perilous, but by means of which Thibet and India find it possible to exchange their respective commodities. Nothing, it is true, resembling a waggon, not even the ordinary beasts of burden, can pass this way. The goods are placed on the backs of goats and sheep, which alone can scramble along these precipitous routes, though, in other respects, these animals are ill fitted for such laborious employments. Goats, in descending, are often pressed down by the load, while sheep, if at all urged, are very apt to run,—a movement which is here attended with the utmost peril.

“The arrangements for facilitating a passage over these frightful cliffs are still more perilous than those employed

on the lower declivities. Rude staircases are constructed along the precipices, by which the traveller is invited to make his way. The road in some places is formed merely by posts driven into the perpendicular sides of the steep, over which branches of trees and earth are spread, affording a narrow footpath, suspended at an awful height above the torrent, and shaking beneath the tread of the passenger.

Amid these awful scenes there are two spots peculiarly sacred and sublime; those, namely, where the Jumna and the Ganges, the two rivers destined to give grandeur and fertility to the plain of Indostan, burst from beneath the eternal snows. No mortal foot has yet ascended to their original springs, situated in the most elevated recesses of the mountains. There they issue forth as torrents, amid broken masses of granite, to force their way through the deep glens of the middle Himmaleh. Above them, huge piles of rock and heaps of snow rise higher and higher, till they shoot up into the two amazing peaks of Roodroo Himala and Jumnavatari.

“The mountain-scenery which surrounds Gangoutri, where the infant Ganges bursts into view, is still more sublime and amazing. The traveller winds his way to this place, clambering over steep rocks, or creeping along the face of precipices, where flights of steps are formed by posts driven into the crevices. At length he reaches the village, consisting only of a few huts and the temple dedicated to Mahadeo. Here the naked and pointed cliffs, shooting up to the skies, with confused masses of rock lying at their feet, and only a few trees rooting themselves in the deep chasms, make the spectator feel as if he trode on the ruins of a former world. Vast shattered precipices, which frown over the temple, have strewn the vicinity with enormous fragments of granite, destined

probably one day to overwhelm the edifice itself. A few old pines throw a dark shade over the troubled waters, whose roar is heard beneath, mingled with the stifled but fearful sound of the stones borne down by the current. Rocky heights shut in the prospect on every side except towards the east, where, behind a crowd of naked spires, the view is bounded by the four snowy peaks of Roodroo Himala.

“The place above mentioned, with the lower shrines of Bhadrinath and Kedarnath, and generally the whole of this region, possess a peculiarly sacred character in the eyes of the Hindoo, the scene of many of the most remarkable fictions in his wildly-poetical mythology. They are esteemed the chosen dwelling of Siva or Mahadeo, the third personage in the Hindoo trinity, who, in withdrawing from Lunka or Ceylon, threw up, it is pretended, the Himmaleh as his place of retreat. Dewtas or spirits are imagined to haunt the most inaccessible glens, and by feigned sounds to allure the unfortunate passenger into their recesses, whence he never returns to the living world. Pilgrimage, the favourite form of Hindoo devotion, is most frequently performed into these mysterious solitudes, where many, however, in attempting to penetrate by the rugged paths buried in snow, either perish, or lose partially the use of their limbs. The perilous obstacles which bar the approach to Gangoutri, deter the greater number of the devotees, who ascend from the great fair at Hurdwar, from proceeding beyond the lower shrine of Bhadrinath.

“The Deccan or Southern Peninsula, presents none of those singular features that distinguish the great central plain and its grand northern boundary. Hills occasionally rising to the rank of mountains, and enclosing table-lands of various elevation, diversify its surface, and secure for it

at once the climate and vegetation of the tropical and of the temperate zones. The most prominent features is a range of heights corresponding to the triangular form of the peninsula. The northern border consists in a tract of high country stretching across India from the Gulf of Cambay to the Bay of Bengal, chiefly along both banks of the Nerbudda, and composing the provinces of Malwa, Candeish, and Gundwana, to which has been given the appellation of Central India. From its extremities extend two parallel chains, called the Gates or Ghauts, which, at a greater or less distance, girdle the whole of the opposite coasts of Malabar and Coromandel. The Western Ghauts, which range along the Indian Ocean, are placed generally at a small distance from the sea, and sometimes approach so close that their cliffs are washed by its waves. More commonly removed from the shore ten or twelve miles, they are seen to rear their peaks, which are crowned, not like those of the Himmaleh, with the trees of the temperate or arctic zones, but with the stately palms and aromatic shrubs which form the pride of tropical groves. The most valuable of these productions are the plant or vine bearing the pepper,—the betel, whose leaves are the universal masticatory in India,—the areca-palm, whose nut is chewed along with the betel,—the sago-palm, whence flows a rich and nourishing juice,—the cocoa-palm, so famed for its numerous and important uses. Higher than them all towers the teak-tree, whose timber, stronger and more durable than that of the British oak, forms the material of oriental navies.

“The Eastern Ghauts, rising behind the Coromandel coast, are generally of a less lofty and rugged description, and leave a broader plain between them and the sea; yet, unless in the Deltas of the great rivers, this plain bears

somewhat of a naked and arid character. There occur even extensive tracts of sandy soil impregnated with saline substances, with which the atmosphere is in some degree tainted. More to the north, in Orisso and the Circars, the high grounds often closely approach the sea, and consist to a great extent of mountain and jungle, continuing in a more uncultivated state, and peopled by more uncivilized races, than almost any other part of India.

“ These three ranges enclose a high table-land, elevated from two to four thousand feet above the level of the sea, and comprising the main body of Southern India. The south-western tract, the original seat of Mahratta power, forms a hilly country, not extremely rugged, but interspersed with deep valleys. It bears a decidedly highland character, fitted for the residence of a pastoral people of warlike and predatory habits. The central region, composing the once powerful kingdoms of Golconda and Bejapore, comprises extensive plains, secured by their elevation from the scorching heats which afflict the territory along the coast. The surface is generally level, and possesses much fertility, though diversified by those remarkable insulated steeps which form the almost impregnable hill-forts of India. The extreme southern district, called the Carnatic, is divided into two table-lands, the Balaghaut and the Mysore, more elevated and rugged than those of the Deccan, and on that account including a greater variety of climate, soil, and production.

“ The mountain-scenery of Southern India in general, though wanting those features which invest the Himmaleh with so awful and sublime a character, is beautifully, striking, and picturesque. It is more on the scale of that of Wales and Scotland,—with this peculiarity, that it never rises above the limit of the richest vegetation, and has its

highest summits crowned with woods and verdure. The greater part is under cultivation; though there is distributed over it a considerable portion of jungle, rock, forest, and even of sandy waste.

“The national and political condition of the different regions of India varies strikingly according to the peculiarities in their physical circumstances. The great central plain, for example, has generally from the earliest ages, been the seat of an empire whose greatness and splendour have eclipsed those of almost every other country. Some detached portions, as Bengal in the east, and the Punjaub in the west, have been frequently separated from the main body, but, under a vigorous and warlike dynasty, they have been as often reunited. It might have been expected that India, separated from other countries by a vast ocean and the loftiest mountain-barrier on earth, would have been secured from all except internal agitation; but nothing could arrest the progress of the avarice and ambition which were attracted by the fame of her wealth and splendour. That ocean has been passed,—those mountain-barriers have been scaled,—and India has for ages groaned, and continues to groan without hope of deliverance, under a foreign yoke.”

MADEIRA,—*See Letter II, p. 5.*

“THIS island, in the Atlantic Ocean, 54 miles long and 20 broad, and 250 N. by E. of Teneriff—Capital Funchal—was discovered by the Portuguese in 1419, and being uninhabited and covered with wood received the name of *Madeira*. The next year a colony was settled on the island by Prince Henry, who not only furnished it with the plants and domestic animals common in Europe, but procured slips of the vine from Cyprus, and plants of the sugar-cane from Sicily; and in the commerce of Portugal, the sugar and wine of Madeira very soon became articles of considerable importance. The sugar-works have been removed; but its wine is now held in the highest estimation, especially after having been a voyage to the East or West Indies. The scorching heat of summer and the icy chill of winter are here unknown; for spring and autumn reign continually, and produce flowers and fruits throughout the year. The cedar tree is found in abundance, and the dragon tree is a native of the island. Flowers nursed in the English green-houses grow wild in the fields—the hedges are in most instances formed of the myrtle, rose, jasmine, and honeysuckle—and the larkspur, fleur-de-lis, lupin, &c. spring up spontaneously in the meadows. Reptiles are few in number, of which the lizard is the most common; while the canary and the gold-finch are found in the mountains. The hog too range wild among the mountains, where they are hunted and caught by the dog, the flesh of which is much relished by the inhabitants. Salted cod is the chief food of the poor, which is imported from America. Madeira is well watered and populous.”

BOMBAY.—*See Letter II, p. 6.*

“BOMBAY is an island, situated on the west coast of the deccan of Indostan, 7 miles in length, and 20 in circumference. At the marriage of the Infanta Catherine to Charles II. it was ceded to the English as part of her marriage dowry. Some misunderstanding arose as to the extent of this grant, the English conceiving it to include Salsette and other dependencies; while the Portuguese chose to view it as not extending beyond the bare precincts of the island,—in which last interpretation Britain was finally obliged to acquiesce. Thus the crown acquired for the first time a territorial possession in India; which, however, did not yield revenue sufficient to defray its expenses. In 1668, the government made over the entire sovereignty to the East India Company, who, in 1687, transferred thither from Surat the presidency over their other settlements; and Bombay has ever since continued the capital of all their possessions on that side of Indostan. It contains a strong and capacious fortress, a city, dockyard, and marine arsenal. Some of the finest merchant ships are built here all of teak, supplied from the neighbouring countries, and which is allowed to be much superior to the English oak for that purpose. In 1810, the *Minden*, 74 gun-ship, was launched, having been built under the superintendance of a *Persee*. The ground is in general barren, and good water scarce; but it has abundance of cocoa-nuts, and its markets are well supplied with every delicacy. The population of the territory of Bombay is estimated at 225,000, three-fourths of which are Hindoos, the remainder Mahometans, Armenians, and Jews, and about 8000 *Persees* or fire worshippers, (for a full account

of which, see Letter III. p. 8.) The city of Bombay next to Calcutta, may be considered the most commercial place in all Indostan; its interchange with China is very great, the export of cotton sometimes amounting to 350,000 bales per annum. It is much resorted to by traders from Persia, Arabia, Abyssinia, Armenia, and all parts of western Asia, as well as from most of the islands of the Indian Ocean, and all the eastern parts of Asia, and the commercial transactions are conducted with more integrity than is usual in Asiatic cities. It is about 180 miles south of Surat, and 1300 west by south of Calcutta. The lighthouse, which is a very prominent object, and visible for 20 miles out at sea, is in lat. 18. 53. N. and 72. 53. E. lon."

TANNA.—See Letter V. p. 12.

“TANNA, the capital of the island of Salsette, 15 miles north east of Bombay, from which it is separated by a narrow channel, across which a causeway was carried in 1805, which has much benefited the island. This island is about 15 miles square, and is fertile in rice, fruits, and sugar-canes. It has subterraneous temples cut out of the rock, in the manner of those of Elephanta. In 1773 the English conquered it from the Mahrattas; and it has proved a valuable acquisition to Bombay, which formerly depended on foreign supplies for its subsistence.”

GOA.—*See Letter VIII. p. 21.*

“ THIS town is situated upon an island twenty-three miles in circuit, if island it may be called, which is separated from the land only by a salt-marsh fordable in many places. The surface is fertile, diversified by little hills and valleys, and almost sufficient of itself to supply a great city with every necessary of life. The surrounding territory, called Canara, forms the seacoast of the Deccan. It had been conquered by the Mogul, and annexed to the dominions of Delhi; but, in the distracted state of that empire, several independent kingdoms had arisen in the south, among which Narsinga, with its capital of Bisnagar, set the example, although the sovereign of Goa, called the zabaim, was the most powerful of these rulers. Timoia, (an Indian pirate) however, gave notice that this prince, being occupied in war with several states of the interior, had left his capital almost unprotected. Albuquerque readily embracing this suggestion, hastily assembled an expedition, and, in conjunction with his guide, arrived off Goa on the 25th February, 1510. Several of the forts which defended the approaches having been taken, and the Portuguese fleet brought up close to the walls, the citizens, who were chiefly persons connected with trade, began seriously to ponder the consequences were the place to be taken by storm, especially by an enemy whose deeds of mercy had never been conspicuous. They sent, therefore, a deputation, composed principally of merchants, who privately intimated that the Portuguese commander might obtain admission on certain conditions, including full protection to commerce and private property. Albuquerque granted these terms, and was immediately put in possession

of Goa. He fulfilled his stipulations in the strictest manner, adopting every measure calculated to preserve order and prosperity, and even continuing many of the natives in their civil employments. Having occupied the palace of the zabaim, he assumed at once the character of a great eastern potentate; sending an embassy to the King of Narsinga, and receiving, in the most gracious manner, those of Persia and Ormuz, who were then on a mission to the sovereign of Goa. But he soon found himself by no means in the secure and agreeable position he at first imagined. The zabaim, on hearing that his capital was in the possession of those hated foreign invaders, roused all his energies, and disregarded every object in comparison with their immediate expulsion. He at once concluded peace with his enemies, several of whom made common cause with him against this powerful adversary; and an army of upwards of 40,000 men began its march under his direction. Albuquerque undauntedly viewed its advance, though combined with an internal danger perhaps still more formidable. In this distant service, the spirit of discipline was not easily maintained, and both men and officers had acquired a habit of criticising the proceedings of their general. There arose a numerous party, who argued, that with so small a number of troops, and without any prospect of reinforcement, it was madness to attempt making head against the numerous force now approaching, surrounded by a population generally hostile, and in the heart of an immense city, whose inhabitants watched for an opportunity of aiding in their destruction. These fears and reasonings were by no means without foundation; but the lofty spirit of Albuquerque indignantly repelled the idea of tamely quitting so magnificent a prize. A faction of nine hundred Portuguese insisted that so brave an army ought

not to be sacrificed to the obstinacy of one man, and began to form plots for wresting the power from their commander, and carrying into effect their own counsels. But having traced this plot to its origin, he surprised the conspirators at a secret meeting, and threw the ringleaders into prison. The remainder sued for pardon, which he could not well refuse, being unable to want the services of any of his small number of troops; they were, therefore, with a very few exceptions, restored to their employments.

The zabaim meantime advanced upon the city. The chief hope of Albuquerque depended upon his success in defending the approaches to the island; but the channel separating it from the mainland was so narrow, and in many places so shallow, that it presented by no means an insuperable obstacle. He stationed chosen troops at all the exposed points, covering them with walls and intrenchments. The zabaim, completely baffled in his first attempts had almost resigned himself to despair; but he at length bethought himself of a nocturnal attack, favoured by the monsoon. The night of the 17th May being dark and stormy, two large bodies advanced at different points, and though unable to surprise the Portuguese, succeeded in forcing their way into the island. The whole army was soon transported over, and commenced operations against the city. Albuquerque stood his ground with his characteristic firmness; but as the enemy was aided by repeated risings within the walls, while his own officers took occasion to renew their remonstrances as to the untenable nature of this new possession, he found at last no alternative but to retire into the fort, whence, by means of the river, on which it was situated, he could still communicate with the fleet. But the zabaim, having taken possession of Goa, immediately commenced operations for reducing this strong-

hold. By sinking large ships in the stream, he endeavoured to interrupt the communication, and at the same time provided pitch, sulphur, and other combustibles, for the purpose of setting fire to the Portuguese squadron. Albuquerque, unable to obstruct the progress of these fatal measures, at last felt that he must evacuate the fortress. Even this was become difficult; but he executed his resolution with vigour and success. Having conveyed privately on board all the guns, ammunition, and provisions, and seen the troops embark in profound silence, he went himself last into the flagship. He might have reached the fleet unnoticed and unmolested, had not the explosion of a magazine roused the enemy, and given rise to a severe encounter.

Albuquerque, thus compelled to move out to sea, was anxious to do something which might redeem the honour lost in this undertaking, and revive the spirits of his men. At Pangin, near Goa, the enemy had formed a strongly-intrenched camp, and frequently sent out vessels to annoy the Portuguese. The viceroy fitted out an expedition, which, approaching in deep silence, reached the shore at the first dawn, suddenly landed, and having sounded the drums and trumpets, and raised loud shouts, the Indians awoke in such a panic, that they ran off without once facing the assailants. The European commander, at full leisure, carried off a great quantity of artillery and stores, as well as a large supply of provisions. Learning soon after that a squadron was preparing to attack him, he anticipated the movement by sending a number of ships under his nephew, Antony Noronha, who was met by the Indian chief at the head of thirty paraós; but, after an obstinate conflict, the latter was compelled to retreat full speed to the shore. The Portuguese followed,

when Peter and Ferdinand Andrade, with five men, boarded the admiral's vessel; but Noronha, mounting behind them, was severely wounded, and fell into the boat. Amid the general anxiety, and while all efforts were employed to remove the captain out of danger, the Andrades and their party were forgotten; the ship, by the receding of the tide, was left on dry land; they were attacked by immensely superior numbers, and could defend themselves only by prodigies of valour. When their condition was observed, it was for some time doubtful how to reach them; at length eight bold mariners pushed on shore in the long-boat, attacked and made themselves masters of the ship; but, being unable to tow it off, were obliged to content themselves with the feat of rescuing their comrades. It is pleasing, amid the ferocity of this war, to find an exchange of chivalrous courtesy. The zabaim sent messengers, expressing his admiration of the valour of the Portuguese; and a polite answer was returned. A negotiation for peace was even opened, though without success.

The pride of the enemy being humbled, and the spirits and courage of the Portuguese revived by these exploits, Albuquerque sailed to Cananor, where he refitted his fleet, and received considerable reinforcements; resolving, as soon as the season allowed, to make a second attempt upon Goa. His confidence of a happier issue on this occasion, seems to have been founded chiefly on the fact that the zabaim was involved in war with the kingdom of Narsinga, which was likely for some time to occupy the greater part of his forces. Unable, however, to muster more than 1500 Portuguese and 300 native troops, it was a very serious undertaking to attack a large and strong capital, garrisoned by upwards of 9000 men. Goa had been farther strengthened by a new wall and ditch, and by a stockade

drawn through the water, behind which the ships were moored in security, and stood like so many towers.— However, Albuquerque arrived in front of the city, and though there was no appearance of his ally Timoia, he determined not to delay the assault. In the morning he opened with his cannon a tremendous fire, and the whole shore was wrapt in a cloud of smoke, illuminated only by the flashes. He landed and divided his troops into two parts, one of which was led by himself, and attacked the northern quarter; the other, in three separate bands, proceeded in an opposite direction. One division, led by the Limas and other chosen heroes, anticipated their commander, and drove the enemy within the walls. As the latter were shutting the gate, Fernando Melos thrust in a large spear, which prevented it from closing. Several others following the example, it was, after a most desperate struggle, forced open, and the Portuguese entered along with the fugitives. These, however, still made a resolute stand in the houses and corners of the streets, particularly in the palace of the zabaim. Here a strong body had taken post, and twenty Portuguese who rashly advanced, were almost entirely cut to pieces. John de Lima, on forcing a passage, found his brother Jeronymo, with several of his comrades, lying in the agonies of death, but the fallen chief professed perfect resignation to his fate, and entreated that there might not, on his account, be an instant's delay. The enemy, driven from the palace, rallied on a neighbouring hill. The commander, who had been extremely surprised to find the battle raging in the city, now entered, but had still to wage a hard contest of six hours' duration before Goa was completely in his power.

Albuquerque, being left for some time in the undisturbed possession of this capital, applied himself to secure it

as a permanent acquisition to his country. His views on this subject materially differed from those of Almeyda, who conceived it wisest to keep their fleets united and at sea, only touching occasionally at friendly ports. So combined, they appeared to him more formidable than when dispersed over different stations and settlements, while they could at the same time overawe the native powers without giving any reasonable ground of jealousy. Albuquerque's opinion, on the contrary, was, that a large city and a spacious port, which they could call their own, were essential to the maintainance of Portuguese supremacy. They would then have a secure station for their fleets, a fixed point for receiving reinforcements, and a retreat in case of disaster, without depending on the precarious friendship of native allies. He studied, therefore, to render Goa a suitable capital for an eastern empire. He sent and received ambassadors, whom he astonished by the display of a pomp surpassing even that of India; and he surprised them still more by the extensive fortifications and useful works which he had already constructed. He viewed it also as an essential object to attach the natives to his government, for which purpose he adopted a somewhat singular expedient. Having numerous female captives, some belonging to the first families in the country, he treated them in the most honourable manner; but, not satisfied with this, he proceeded to arrange matrimonial connexions between them and his European followers, without leaving much choice on either side. Some such procedure is at least alluded to by De Barros, when he compares his mode of cementing the Portuguese power to that employed by Romulus for peopling his infant state of Rome. It was made an absolute condition with the brides that they should embrace Christianity; an obstacle

which was not found insurmountable, the prejudices of caste and religion being less deeply rooted there than in other quarters of India. A few such marriages being formed, the viceroy showed the parties peculiar favour, and bestowed on the husbands some of his best appointments. The principal families, finding themselves aggrandized by these connexions, no longer objected to them, and additions were easily made to their number. De Barros tells an odd story of a great number of weddings being celebrated at once with a splendid festival, when the lights being prematurely extinguished, it became difficult for the parties to recognise each other, and they fell into many mistakes. Next morning an investigation was proposed; but, on mature reflection, it was judged wisest, that each should remain content with the wife who had accidentally fallen to his lot, though different from the one to whom the church had united him; and the affair furnished to the army only an occasion of mirth.

Having thus settled the government, the viceroy resumed the consideration of his more distant schemes of conquest. Two objects engrossed his mind,—Ormuz, the splendid emporium of the Persian Gulf, which had been snatched from him almost in the moment of victory; and Malacca, a native kingdom, considered then as the key of the remotest regions and islands of Asia. The latter obtained the preference. The capital, though situated upon the coast of a barren peninsula, was enriched in an extraordinary degree by being the emporium of the commerce carried on between Indostan, China, and the eastern islands,—a trade which now gives prosperity to Singapore. Albuquerque sailed thither with a force of eight hundred Portuguese, and six hundred natives, to oppose which the king had mustered a garrison that has been represented as

exceeding 30,000. Negotiations were opened, and professions made on both sides of a desire for peace; but it was obvious that such an expedition could terminate only in an appeal to arms. A vigorous resistance was made by wooden machines, cannon, and a species of artificial fire peculiar to the East; but the intrepidity of Albuquerque and his followers finally triumphed. He expelled all the native troops, and became complete master of the city. He immediately began to erect a strong fort out of the materials of the shattered palaces; he settled the government on that firm yet conciliatory principle which distinguished his policy; and opened negotiations with Siam, Java, and Sumatra, from which countries it is even asserted that he received friendly embassies.

During Albuquerque's absence on this expedition, the zabaim mustered his forces, and sent a powerful army under successive commanders who forced their way into the Island of Goa, erected there a strong fort called Benaster, and pressed the city very closely. The viceroy, having at last arrived with a considerable reinforcement, obliged the enemy to raise the siege, but was completely repulsed in an attack on the garrison; and it was not till after repeated assaults that he was able to drive the enemy from their fortress, and finally established the Portuguese supremacy in Goa.

The viceroy again resumed his plans of distant conquest, but was baffled in two successive attempts upon Aden, then the chief emporium of the Red Sea. At length he equipped a great armament to achieve the most favorite object of his ambition. With 1500 European and 600 Asiatic troops he sailed against Ormuz, where his strength was considered so formidable, that the king did not venture to oppose his demand for permission to erect

a fort. Having performed this task with his usual diligence, he forthwith suggested the great convenience of transporting to this station all the cannon in the city. The unfortunate monarch, conscious of the state to which he was reduced, felt it no longer possible to refuse even this request; and the celebrated Ormuz became completely a Portuguese establishment.

This brilliant career was approaching to its close. Albuquerque was now somewhat advanced in years, and his constitution, exhausted by so many toils, began to exhibit symptoms of decay. Finding his health in an infirm state, he became anxious to revisit Goa. As he passed along the coast of Cambay, letters arrived with tidings which struck him to the heart. A new fleet had come out, and Lope Soarez, the name of all others which he most detested, not only commanded it, but was appointed to supersede him as Governor of India. New officers were nominated to the principal vessels and forts,—all of them known to be most hostile to his interest. His power and influence, he felt, were at an end. The Portuguese writers, always silent on every thing which might effect the credit of their sovereign, give no hint of the motives that induced him to cast off so suddenly the man who had conquered for him a great empire. European counsellors, it may be presumed, possessed the ear of the monarch, and might whisper that the viceroy was becoming too great to continue a subject. There was not even a letter or any other mark of honour to soften this deep disgrace.

The death-blow had now been given to Albuquerque, who no longer wished to live. Amid his agonies, it was suggested to him that the attachment of his adherents was so devoted as might enable him to defy the mandate of an ungrateful master, and still remain ruler of the In-

dian Seas. He seems to have opened his mind for a moment to the temptation, but finally repelled it, and sought only in the grave a refuge for his wounded pride and honour. Violently agitated, refusing food and refreshment, and calling every hour for death, he could not be long of finding it. As his end approached, he was persuaded to write a short letter to the king in favour of his son, expressed in the following proud and pathetic terms:—"Sen-
 or,—This is the last letter which, in the agonies of death, I write to your Highness, of the many which I have written during the long period of my life, when I had the satisfaction of serving you. In your kingdom I have a son, by name Braz de Albuquerque, whom I entreat your Highness to favour as my services may merit. As for the affairs of India, they will speak for themselves and for me." Feeling that he must die before reaching Goa, his mind became tranquillized; he ascribed the present change to the ordination of Providence, and turned all his thoughts to that other world on which he was about to enter. A light barge sent before him brought out the vicar-general, who administered to him the sacraments of the church; and on the morning of the 16th December, 1515, he expired. He was carried in pomp to the shore, where his funeral was celebrated by the tears both of the Portuguese and of the natives, whose hearts he had completely attached to him. Thus died Alphonso d'Albuquerque, who stood foremost among his countrymen, and ranks with the greatest naval commanders of modern Europe."

MADRAS.—See *Letter IX*, p. 25.

“MADRAS or *Fort St George*, a celebrated fort and city of Indostan, 100 miles north by east of Pondicherry, lon. 80.—25. east lat. 13. 5. north, the capital of the British possessions on the east side of the Peninsula, and is a fortress of very great extent. It is close on the margin of the Bay of Bengal, from which it has a rich and beautiful appearance, the houses being covered with a stucco called chunam, which in itself is nearly as compact as the finest marble, and bears as high a polish. The Black Town is separated from the fort by an esplanade. In common with all the European settlements on this coast, Madras has no port for shipping, the coast forming nearly a straight line; and it is incommoded also with a high and dangerous surf. It is the seat of an archdeaconry, and of missions from different societies in Britain. In 1746 it was taken by the French, but restored by the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.

On the breaking out of the memorable war, in 1756, between Britain and France, an extensive armament was fitted out by the government of the latter, to make the most vigorous efforts to acquire an ascendancy in India. The person entrusted with this important mission was a Count Lally, an officer of Irish extraction, who had made several very brilliant displays of valour at the battle of Fontenoy. He landed at Pondicherry on the 25th April, 1758, and prepared to make an immediate attack on Fort St. David, considered at that time the strongest and most important of the English settlements in the East. The garrison, after making a very injudicious defence, throwing away their shot on insignificant objects, was obliged to surrender; the troops became prisoners of war, and the

fortress was razed to the ground. Lally returned to Pondicherry in the highest exultation, and determined to lose no time in following up his design of extirpating the English from India. After taking possession of Arcot and several other places in the Carnatic, he deemed it expedient to commence a siege against Madras, which he carried on for upwards of two months, under great difficulties. The garrison, consisting of 1,758 Europeans and 2,420 natives, commanded by Governor Pigot and the veteran Laurence, made the most gallant defence. The siege was terminated by the appearance, on the 16th February, of a squadron of six English vessels, containing six hundred fresh troops. As soon as this fleet hove in sight, the French army, without waiting their commander's orders, began to retreat with the utmost precipitation, and the general had not time to execute his cruel purpose of burning the Black Town."

MALACCA.—See *Letter X.* p. 27.

"MALACCA, or *Malaya*, an extensive country of India, beyond the Ganges, bounded on the N. by Siam, E. by the ocean, and S. W. by the strait of Malacca, which separates it from Sumatra. It is 775 miles in length and 125 in breadth; and produces a great many excellent fruits and roots, pepper, and other spices, with some precious gums and woods. There is but little corn, and sheep and oxen are scarce; but hogs and poultry are plentiful. The population is about 15,000, principally Malays, who are

deemed the most ferocious people on the face of the globe; they are however a very fine looking race of men, rather below the middle stature; limbs well shaped; tawny complexion; large eyes, and long black shining hair. They are fond of navigation, war, plunder, emigration, adventures and gallantry; talk incessantly of their honor and bravery, and speak the softest language of Asia. The government is vested in a rajah, or sultan, with a great number of chiefs under him, who generally pay very little regard to his authority. Their religion is a mixture of Mahomedism and paganism. The inland parts are possessed by a savage and barbarous people."

JAVA.—*See Letter XI, p. 29.*

"THIS island is sometimes called Great Java, to distinguish it from Bali, by some named Little Java; and is 640 miles in length, and of various breadth, extending from 105. to 116. E. lon., and 6. to 9. S. lat. The land is low, and in some places marshy, near the shore, which renders the air unhealthy; but it rises in a gradual slope towards the interior of the country, admitting in its ascent every variety of situation and verdure. Rice is the staple production of the island, and is exported in considerable quantity. Sugar, pepper, cotton, and coffee, are produced in abundance. Indigo, of a very superior quality, is also cultivated; and wheat, barley, oats, and Bengal grain, thrive well and might be produced in great abundance, if due attention were bestowed on their culture. The north

coast has a great many commodious creeks, bays, harbours, and towns, with many little islands near the shore. The inhabitants are chiefly Javanese; next to these are the Malays; and in the seaports a considerable number of Chinese are settled. The Javanese inhabit all the interior parts of the island, and are in general the cultivators of the soil. They are described as a barbarous, proud, and fierce people, of a brown complexion, short, coal-black hair, large cheeks, small eyes, and large eyebrows. The men are very robust and strong limbed; the women are small, but of pleasing countenance, and in some districts they are really beautiful. The men wear a piece of calico, which is the principal manufacture of the island, wrapt two or three times round their middle; and the women wear them from the armpits down to the knees; but all other parts are bare. The men have two or three wives, and several concubines, according to their circumstances. The Javanese appear, from remains of temples and inscriptions, to be of Hindoo descent, and their language is quite distinct from that of the Malays; but the professed religion of both is Mahomedism. The Malays principally inhabit along the coast. They are not so well featured as the Javanese; but the men are often very muscular and well made. They are generally indolent, but at the same time restless, vindictive, and treacherous. The Chinese are distinguished by their habits of industry, and generally by their wealth. Many of them carry on a considerable trade with their native country, and the several islands of the eastern archipelago. They intermarry with the Javanese and Malays, and purchase female slaves for wives and concubines. This island has very high mountains, particularly the Pepper Mountain on the South side; it has, likewise, impassable forests and wildernesses; but to the North be-

tween Batavia and Bantam, is a very populous country, full of rice fields, and plenty of salt and pepper, besides most sorts of fruits proper to the climate. Here also are plenty of hogs, beeves, and sheep, with other tame animals; and likewise fowl, both wild and tame, in great abundance. In the woods are large tigers, rhinoceroses, and other wild beasts; and in the rivers are crocodiles. The serene season is from May till November; and then the rains begin, which lay the low grounds under water, kill the insects, and continue till March, when they commence sowing, and in July the sugar and rice begin to ripen; but September and October are the best months for all sorts of fruits. Java has a river which rises in the mountains, and, dividing itself into many branches, waters the circumjacent country; these afterwards reunite, and pass through Batavia, dividing it into two parts. For more than a century Java was under the dominion of the Dutch. In 1811 it was captured by the British, under Sir Samuel Auchmuty, when many important changes were made in its internal administration, and government also did much to promote agricultural improvements, and the country prospered and enjoyed tranquility.— Since it has been restored to the Dutch they appear, however, to have reverted to their former wretched system, as they have been engaged in quelling insurrections, which there is little doubt were provoked by their arbitrary and vexatious exactions.”

BATAVIA.—*See Letter XII. p. 33.*

“THIS city is finely situated on the bosom of a spacious bay on the north-east part of Java, and capital of all the Dutch settlements in the East Indies. This city was first founded in 1619, and rose rapidly into importance, and during the eighteenth century was deemed the finest European settlement in all Asia; and although considered unhealthy, from the influence of the heat of the climate on the mud and stagnant waters of the canals and streams by which it is intersected, it was vainly denominated by the Dutch, the “Queen of the East.”

Batavia was very sensibly affected by the war of 1793, and became almost deserted, until its capture, with the whole of the island of Java, by the English, in 1811, when it became again the centre of an extensive commerce. It was ceded back to the Dutch on the peace of 1814, who having relaxed somewhat from their former system of proscription and monopoly in their commercial regulations, Batavia continues a flourishing and important place. The fort is built of coral rock, brought from some of the adjoining islands, and has a fortification of brick. A part of the town wall is built of dense lava from the mountains in the centre of Java. No stone of any kind is to be found for many miles beyond the city. Marble and granite are brought from China. The harbour is excellent, and there are canals in the principal streets, planted on each side with trees, after the manner of the towns in Holland. The inhabitants are composed of natives from nearly all the countries and islands of Asia and the Indian Ocean, as well as most of the chief trading parts

of Europe and America, amongst whom the number of Chinese is considerable. The stadthouse is the principal edifice deserving of notice. The natives of the several nations and countries who compose the population, which amounts to about 50,000, have each their churches, mosques, and temples, but there are none that merit any particular notice."

SOURABAYA.—*See Letter XIX, p. 66.*

"SOURABAYA is the capital of a district of the same name, situate within the narrow Strait formed by the islands of Java and Madura, and is defended by batteries. When the French were in possession of Java, they intended to have made Sourabaya a port of some consequence, and large sums of money were expended in the works for the defence of the harbour, and General Daendols was going on with his plans when the island was taken by the British. The houses are generally good, and some even elegant, particularly the country seats of private individuals. Besides an arsenal, with other extensive works, calculated for equipments, on a very large scale, there is a mint at work, on a new silver and copper coinage, and a ship yard, where vessels of a large size are built. The population of this town is about 1800."

CHINESE.—See *Letter XIX.* p. 66—76.

THE description given of the Chinese and their religion in pages 66—76, is from personal observation and other information obtained while in the island of Java, and it may not prove uninteresting to draw a comparison between the Chinese there and those in China. This, however, can only be done by making a few extracts from the works of those authors who have treated on the manners, customs, &c., of that singular people.

RELIGION.—“ There can scarcely be said to be any religion in China—at least as a system of divine worship or a regulation for the conduct of the people. There is no sabbatical institution, nor congregational worship; no external forms of devotion, petition, or thanksgiving. The emperor takes the sole charge of the spiritual concerns of the people, and is the only individual in the nation who directly addresses the Supreme Being, performing at fixed periods certain ceremonies and oblations. The equinoxes are the times when the grand sacrifices in the temple dedicated to Heaven are offered up, when every kind of business is suspended in the capital. The national, or rather Government-religion, may be described as a sort of Deism. The Tien, or Great Spirit, is invested with the attributes of omnipotence and omniscience. The names by which this sovereign power is known are *Whang-tien*, the illustrious heaven; *Chang-tee*, the supreme ruler; *Tien-tee*, heaven and earth; *Che-chung*, the first and the last; *Ken-puen*, root and branch; and other descriptive denominations. In addition to this supreme power, however, the Chinese, like all barbarous nations, invest all the

elements with innumerable spirits and genii, fanciful images of which they worship both in their own houses and in temples dedicated to the purpose. These temples are under the care of the Bonzes, who live unmarried, and associate in convents like Romish monks. The idol-worship exhibited in these temples is characterised by every mark of the most debasing and besotted superstition. When a votary has applied to his idol for some time in vain to obtain a certain boon, he abandons the ungenerous spirit in indignation; sometimes demolishing his image, and kicking it through the streets, with every mark of contumely! In every possible circumstance of life, the Chinese implore the protection and aid of some idol. Should a countryman be about to raise a building, or attempt any other work in which he might lie in danger of receiving injury, he places a small stone upright, surrounds it with a few candles, burns two or three gilded papers, and then proceeds to work with perfect confidence. They also consult oracles previous to undertaking a journey, commencing a law-suit, &c.; and thus the Bonzes, who are the interpreters of the responses, are kept in constant employment. So strong, indeed, is the resemblance of the interior of a temple of Fo, the dress of the priests, and the ceremonies of devotion, to those of the church of Rome, that one of the missionaries says, "it seems as if the devil had run a race with the Jesuits to China, and having got the start of them, had contrived these things for their mortification."

MANNERS, &c.—It may be readily admitted that the Chinese were amongst the first of existing nations who arrived at a certain degree of excellence; but it is not less evident that they have long remained stationary, and have even in some points retrograded. The following assertion

of Sir William Jones may almost be literally adopted:—
 ‘Their letters, if we may so call them, are merely the symbols of ideas; their philosophy is in so rude a state as hardly to deserve the appellation; they have no ancient monuments from which their origin may be traced, even by plausible conjecture; their sciences are wholly exotic; and their mechanical arts have nothing in them characteristic of a particular family—nothing which any set of men in a country so highly favoured might not have discovered and improved.’

In their moral qualities, the Chinese are a strange compound of vanity and meanness, affected gravity and real frivolity—an utter want of all manly judgment and sense, combined with the most insidious art and cunning, the usual accompaniments of vulgar ignorance. The Tartar race are distinguished by a blunt and unstudied frankness of manner and openness of disposition; but the true Chinese betray the most debasing servility of tone and manner—plausible, sly, and artful. They have not the slightest regard to truth, and will assert and deny anything with the most unblushing effrontery, being also entirely destitute of shame. The pain inflicted by the bamboo is the only consideration they attach to public and disgraceful corporeal punishment. They have neither sense of honour nor self-respect. ‘A Chinese prince, or powerful mandarin,’ says a recent traveller, ‘will commit extortion or oppression whenever he can do it with impunity, and regards it as a matter of right attached to his station. A Chinese trader will cheat and defraud whenever it is in his power, and even piques himself upon his skill in overreaching, as a proof of his talent. A Chinese peasant will pilfer and steal whatever is within his reach, whenever he can hope to escape detection; and the whole nation may be

affirmed to have almost nothing in view but their own self-interest and security. Their general character, in short, in point of morals, compared with the minute enforcement of duty by the penal laws, affords an irresistible proof of the utter incompetency of legislation, without the aid of religious principle, to reach beyond the mere external conduct of individuals, or to produce anything like real social virtue among human beings.' In their feelings, the Chinese are cruel, sensual, and vindictive. Mr Barrow, M. de Guignes, and other travellers, all agree in their representations of the inhuman conduct of those in authority. One of the arbitrary laws of China is the compelling of the natives to pull the imperial barges alongst the canals; and Mr Barrow had several opportunities of witnessing the merciless exercise of this authority on the part of the military. The impressed labourers took, of course, every opportunity of deserting; and whenever there was a deficiency of hands, the despotic officials set off to the nearest hamlet, roused the natives out of bed with the whip, made them jump into the water to assist the towing operations, lashing them with long cart-whips all the while with the most ruthless barbarity. Mr Barrow also relates another specimen of Chinese indifference to human life which he witnessed in passing down the great canal betwixt Canton and Peking. Several persons who had crowded to the brink of the canal, had posted themselves upon the high projecting stern of an old vessel, which broke down with their weight, and precipitated the whole group into the water. Although numbers of boats were plying about at the very spot, not one was observed to go to the assistance of the drowning wretches, whose shrieks and cries were totally disregarded.

Nothing is so significant of the moral condition of a

people as their treatment of the female sex, and no where are the women so inhumanely used as in China. They are not permitted to stir out of doors, excepting the wives of the lower orders, who are to be seen toiling at all kinds of laborious tasks, while their indolent husbands are sitting quietly smoking their pipes. In the country they are even to be seen drawing the plough and harrow, while their lazy helpmate drives them on.

Amongst the other moral iniquities of the Chinese, is the crime of infanticide; and from the contempt in which females are generally held, parents expose their female children without the slightest remorse. It is a part of the duty of the Pekin police to go their rounds with carts, at an early hour of the morning, to pick up the bodies of the infants that have been thrown out into the streets in the course of the night, and to carry them, without inquiry, to a common pit without the city walls, where they are thrown in promiscuously. It has been calculated that there are between 20,000 and 30,000 female infants yearly sacrificed in China! What a horrible picture of national depravity does not this one fact present!"

ST. HELENA.—*See Letter XXVIII, p. 123.*

“THIS island was discovered by the Portuguese, on St. Helena’s day, in the year 1501. It was afterwards in the possession of the Dutch till 1600, when they were expelled by the English, and it now belongs to the East India Company. It is 27 miles in circumference, and lies in

the Atlantic Ocean, between the continents of Africa and South America, about 1200 miles west of the former, and 1800 east of the latter. It has some high mountains, particularly one called Diana Peak, which is covered with wood to the very top. There are other hills also, which bear evident marks of a volcanic origin, and some have huge rocks of lava, and a kind of half vitrified flags. The climate of St. Helena is temperate, being exempt from the extremes of heat and cold, from thunder and lightning and hurricanes. It is moist, however, and only about one day in three is illuminated by sunshine. The interior valleys and little hills are covered with verdure, and interspersed with gardens, orchards, and various plantations. Rats, however, are so numerous that the fruit of the husbandman's labour is completely destroyed, and the price of provisions, from that circumstance, greatly enhanced. The most part of the necessaries of life are imported from the Cape of Good Hope and Britain, which makes living on the island very expensive.

St. Helena was little known until it became the prison of Napoleon Bonaparte, the late Emperor of France. He died in May, 1821, and was buried on the island, which have rendered it a spot of historical interest."

THE END.





